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THE ARDEN SHAKESPEARE

General Editor, C. H. HERFORD, Litt.D., *University of Manchester*

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ROMEO AND JULIET

OTHELLO

HAMLET

MACBETH

KING LEAR

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BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO

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General Editor, C. H. HERFORD, Litt.D., *University of Manchester*

THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET

EDITED BY

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PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH IN THE
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D. C. HEATH AND COMPANY

BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO
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GENERAL PREFACE.

In this edition of Shakespeare an attempt is made to present the greater plays of the dramatist in their literary aspect, and not merely as material for the study of philology or grammar. Criticism purely verbal and textual has only been included to such an extent as may serve to help the student in the appreciation of the essential poetry. Questions of date and literary history have been fully dealt with in the Introductions, but the larger space has been devoted to the interpretative rather than the matter-of-fact order of scholarship. Aesthetic judgments are never final, but the Editors have attempted to suggest points of view from which the analysis of dramatic motive and dramatic character may be profitably undertaken. In the Notes likewise, while it is hoped that all unfamiliar expressions and allusions have been adequately explained, yet it has been thought even more important to consider the dramatic value of each scene, and the part which it plays in relation to the whole. These general principles are common to the whole series; in detail each Editor is alone responsible for the play or plays that have been intrusted to him.

Every volume of the series has been provided with a Glossary, an Essay upon Metre, and an Index; and Appendices have been added upon points of special interest, which could not conveniently be treated in the Introduction or the Notes. The text is based by the several Editors on that of the *Globe* edition: the only omissions made are those that are unavoidable in an edition likely to be used by young students.

By the systematic arrangement of the introductory matter, and by close attention to typographical details, every effort has been made to provide an edition that will prove convenient in use.

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INTRODUCTION

1. HISTORY OF THE PLAY

THE earliest edition[1] of *Romeo and Juliet*, so far as is known, is in quarto form, dated 1597, with the title:

"AN | EXCELLENT | conceited Tragedie | OF | Romeo and Iuliet, | As it hath been often (with great applause) | plaid publiquely, by the right Ho- | nourable the L. of *Hunsdon* | his Seruants. | LONDON, | Printed by Iohn Danter. | 1597."

A second Quarto was issued two years later, bearing the title: "THE | MOST EX- | cellent and lamentable | Tragedie, of Romeo | and *Iuliet*. | *Newly corrected, augmented, and* | *amended:* | As it hath bene sundry times publiquely acted, by the | right Honourable the Lord Chamberlaine | his Seruants. | LONDON | Printed by Thomas Creede, for Cuthbert Burby, and are to | be sold at his shop neare the Exchange. | 1599."

In 1609 a third Quarto appeared, substituting for the Lord Chamberlain's Servants on its title-page, "the KINGS Maiesties Seruants," the new name of Shakespeare's company of actors. Probably some years later was published an undated Quarto, on some copies of which appear for the first time the words, "Written by *W. Shake-speare.*" A fifth Quarto was issued in 1637. The play was also printed in the first collection of Shakespeare's plays, made by Heminge and Condell in what is known as the First Folio (F 1), or Folio of 1623, and in all subsequent collected editions.

Careful investigation by many scholars has shown pretty clearly the relationship of these texts to one another. The 1597 Quarto (Q 1) stands alone, and all editors agree that the Quarto of 1599 (Q 2)

[1] Published entire in Furness's *Variorum Edition* of *Romeo and Juliet*. Parallel texts of the first two Quartos have been published and critically edited by Tycho Mommsen: *Shakespeares Romeo and Julia* (1859), and P. A. Daniel, New Shakspere Society, Series II, 1 (1874). Readings of Q 1 which differ most widely from the accepted text will be found in Appendix A.

possesses much greater authority. The third Quarto (Q 3) is based on the text of the second, the undated Quarto and F 1 on Q 3, and all later Quartos and Folios on those that preceded them. That is to say, all accepted texts are based ultimately on Q 2.

The statement on the title-page of Q 2 that the drama was "newly corrected, augmented, and amended," after the composition of Q 1, is believed to be perfectly true. Mr. P. A. Daniel, who has excellently edited the parallel texts, counts 3007 lines in Q 2, and only 2232 lines in Q 1. After minute investigation he finds unmistakable evidence that certain parts of the play were revised by the author. But it is not generally believed that Q 1 represents the play as Shakespeare wrote it before revision. The more commonly accepted view is that Q 1 is a piratical edition "made up partly from copies of the original play, partly from recollection and from notes taken during the performance." However, the text of Q 1 is important for comparative purposes, not only because it contains many lines as they stood before revision by Shakespeare, but because in many other cases evident corruptions in the texts of Qq Ff have been corrected by turning to the corresponding lines in Q 1.

Romeo and Juliet seems to have been presented on the London stage some time between July, 1596, and April, 1597, by Shakespeare's company. The part played by one actor in early performances is known, for in Qq 2, 3 the stage-direction after iv. 5. 101, *Enter Peter*, reads *Enter Will Kemp.* Kemp was a famous comedian who also played Dogberry in *Much Ado.* Mr. William Poel[1] conjectures that Shakespeare himself took the part of Benvolio, both on account of a supposed temperamental similarity between the two, and because of Benvolio's hazel eyes[2] and grandfatherly[3] appearance. But this is not to be proved.

One of the first English allusions to the play is that found in Marston's *Scourge of Villanie* (1598), as follows:

> "I set thy lips abroach, from whence doth flow
> Naught but pure Juliet and Romeo."

A further reference in the same passage to "Curtaine plaudeties" has been taken to mean that The Curtain was the theatre in which the tragedy was being played.[4] The play is again mentioned in

[1] *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1887–92, ii. 235–6.
[2] Cf. iii. 1. 21. [3] Cf. ii. 4. 33.
[4] Cf. Murray, *English Dramatic Companies 1558–1642* (1910), i. 96. The title-page of Q 3 (1609) tells us that the play was then acted at the Globe.

Weever's *Epigrams* (1599), and echoed in the plays of *Wily Beguiled* and *The Wisdom of Doctor Dodipoll*. The popularity thus attested is believed to have continued till the closing of the theatres in 1642. Meanwhile an English company of actors playing at Dresden in 1626 presented a somewhat debased version of the play in the German tongue.[1]

Immediately after the re-opening of the London theatres *Romeo and Juliet* must have been revived, for Pepys saw the first performance and wrote in his Diary, March 1, 1662: "Thence to the Opera, and there saw *Romeo and Juliet*, the first time it was ever acted, but it is a play of itself the worst that ever I heard and the worst acted that ever I saw these people do, and I am resolved to go no more to see the first time of acting, for they were all of them out more or less." In this company Harris was playing Romeo, Betterton Mercutio, and Miss Saunderson Juliet.[2]

Shortly after this time James Howard altered the play to a tragi-comedy, which saved the lives of both lovers, and it is recorded that Howard's version and Shakespeare's were actually played on alternate nights. But the most notable recasting of the play was done by Thomas Otway, author of *Venice Preserved*. In a play called *The History and Fall of Caius Marius*, Otway attempted to graft the plot of this tragedy on the story of one of Plutarch's Roman heroes, frankly acknowledging in his prologue that about half the play was *Romeo and Juliet*. *Caius Marius* was first played at Dorset Garden in 1680, with Betterton and Mrs. Barry taking important parts. Later it was on the boards at both Drury Lane and the Haymarket with Mrs. Bracegirdle, again with Mrs. Porter, in the heroine's rôle, but, strange to say, each time the Nurse was played by a man. Though this hybrid continued to be acted at least as late as 1717 and drove Shakespeare's play from the stage for sixty years, modern readers find in it little to enhance Otway's reputation.

At last in 1744 Theophilus Cibber at the Haymarket revived Shakespeare's play, with the addition of a few lines from Otway. Here, as in Otway and in Da Porto before him, Juliet is made to awake before Romeo dies from the poison. The revival was attended with great success, and at Drury Lane four years later it

[1] Printed entire, with English translation in parallel columns, by Cohn, *Shakespeare in Germany* (1865), pp. 310 ff. An elaborate examination of this German version is made by M. J. Wolff, *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, xlvii. (1911), 92 ff.

[2] Genest, *History of the English Stage* (1832), i. 42.

was acted nineteen times with Barry and Mrs. Cibber in the leading parts. A notable example of stage rivalry began Sept. 28, 1750, when Barry and Mrs. Cibber at Covent Garden vied with Garrick and Miss Bellamy at Drury Lane in presenting this play night after night till October 9 in their respective theatres. From that day to this the play has remained a favorite with London theatre-goers.

Nor has its popularity been confined to England. The first known English company of actors coming to America in 1752, under the leadership of Lewis Hallam, presented this as one of three Shakespearian plays in New York;[1] and when Philadelphia built its first permanent theatre, the Southwark, in 1766, this was among the first plays given there.[2] By the end of the eighteenth century the drama had been translated into both German and French. In Germany it has been almost second to *Hamlet* in popularity. Goethe arranged the play for performance in the Weimar Theatre in 1811,[3] and this version held possession of the Berlin stage till 1849. Ducis produced a French adaptation of it in 1771, it has been translated into French four or five times, and there are many echoes of Shakespeare's language, especially of the balcony scene, in one modern French play, Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

2. THE DATE OF THE PLAY

The date of composition of the play cannot be determined with certainty. One limit is fixed by the statement on the title-page of Q 1 that it was played by "the L. of Hunsdon his servants." Now we know that this company of actors was so called only between July, 1596, and April, 1597, because the First Lord Hunsdon, who was Lord Chamberlain, died July 22, 1596, his son became Lord Chamberlain on April 17, 1597, and except in the interval the actors were called the Lord Chamberlain's servants. So the play must have been on the stage during that period. But whether it was an entirely new play then, whether it had been played for several years,

[1] See Seilhamer, G. O., *History of the American Theatre* (1888), i. 47. *Romeo and Juliet* was the only one of the three repeated during the season. The other plays were *Richard III* and *Lear*.

[2] Ibid., pp. 154, 155, showing that it was played three times that season, as was true of no other Shakespearian drama. It had been played in Charleston in 1764. See *The Nation*, xcvi. 201 (New York, 1913).

[3] Summarized in Furness's *Variorum Romeo and Juliet*, pp. 443 ff.

or whether it had already been revised from its original form are questions hard to solve. Internal evidence gives some assistance. Many critics have seen in the Nurse's words, "'T is since the earthquake now eleven years" (i. 3. 23; note on that line) a definite reference to the earthquake of 1580, which terrified all England. On that ground they have dated the original composition of the play at 1591, an assumption scarcely warranted by the nature of the evidence. Yet the frequency of rhyme and word quibbling in the play, its metrical characteristics in general, the passionate nature of its emotion, all argue for composition during Shakespeare's youth. We shall not go far astray then in assigning it to the period between 1593 and 1595, with revision some two or three years after the original version was put on the stage.

3. SOURCES OF THE PLOT

In various forms the essential incidents of *Romeo and Juliet* appeared in literary history long before Shakespeare's birth. We may be sure that Shakespeare himself was unacquainted with most of these versions, yet it is interesting to trace their appearance in literature.[1]

What is apparently the earliest literary form of the story is the *noveliino* of Massuccio of Salerno (1476), in which two Sienese lovers, Mariotto Mignanelli and Gianozza Saraceni, are secretly wedded and then separated on the hero's flight to Alexandria following his committal of homicide. To avoid wedding another man, chosen for her by her father, Gianozza resorts to a sleeping potion furnished by a friar, is delivered from the tomb, and escapes to Alexandria in disguise of a monk. Her messenger to Mariotto is captured by pirates, her husband receives a false report of her death, comes to her tomb, and attempting to break it open is captured and beheaded. The wife dies in a convent of a broken heart. But Luigi da Porto, in his *Istoria di due nobili amanti* (*circa* 1530), first localized the story in Verona, named the lovers Romeo and Giulietta, and assigned a family feud as the motive for the secret marriage. Da Porto mentions no Nurse, but his Count of Lodrone corresponds to Paris. Romeo's courtship lasts for many days, and his banishment occurs some time after the secret

[1] In a Greek romance by Xenophon of Ephesus, the story of *Abrocomas and Anthia*, first printed in 1726, the heroine escapes from an undesired wedding by means of a sleeping potion.

wedding. Before the poison has slain her husband, Giulietta awakens in the tomb, and a pathetic dialogue ensues, followed by the death of both. In 1554 came the important prose version of Bandello, who develops the story at some length and employs almost all the characters and incidents that appear in the versions to which Shakespeare is immediately indebted. For example, Bandello mentions characters corresponding to Rosaline and Benvolio, and dwells on Romeo's first love, Paris is so christened, and the Nurse is created.

From Italian the tale now passed into other languages. Pierre Boaistuau translated Bandello into French prose in his *Histoires Tragiques* (1559), making two important changes from his source. Bandello had followed Da Porto in having Juliet waken before Romeo's death, converse with him for some minutes, and after his death expire from grief. Boaistuau makes her awaken to find her husband already dead, and upon discovering this fact, to slay herself with his dagger.[1] From Boaistuau came two, and possibly three, English redactions which were known to Shakespeare. Evidence that Shakespeare was acquainted with any foreign version is exceedingly weak.

First in importance of these English redactions is Arthur Brooke's poem, *Romeus and Juliet*, published in 1562.[2] On his title-page Brooke tells us that the "history" was "written first in Italian by Bandell," but his lines are evidently based on Boaistuau's French rather than on Bandello's Italian. In some places

[1] Attempts have been made to prove that Shakespeare was indebted to another dramatic version of the tale, blind Groto's tragedy, *La Hadriana*, but the weight of critical opinion is against this theory. The theme served also as the plot of two Spanish plays, Lope de Vega's tragi-comedy, *Castelvines y Monteses*, and *Los Bandos de Verona* by Francisco de Rojas. A comic Italian version, *Li tragici successi* (Venice, 1611), is discussed by Miss Winifred Smith in *Modern Philology*, vii. 217–20 (October, 1909). The statement made by Girolamo de la Corte in his history of Verona (1594, 1596), that the story is historically true, is not now accepted. Prince Escalus had historical origin in the person of Bartolomeo de la Scala, who ruled Verona about 1303, but otherwise the plot is the product of fiction.

[2] A fairly complete summary of the poem is given in Appendix B of this volume, though no attempt is there made to quote all lines or expressions apparently echoed in the play. The entire poem has been reprinted and edited several times, notably by P. A. Daniel for the New Shakspere Society, Series II, 1 (1875), and more recently by J. J. Munro, in The Shakespeare Classics (1908).

Brooke's poem is a very close translation of Boaistuau, but as a rule he translates freely, as may easily be seen by a comparison of the poem with the much more literal prose translation by Painter. Brooke moves with special freedom in his treatment of the Nurse. He it is to whom we are first indebted for accounts of her conversations with Romeo and with Juliet about Romeo, and for mention of her bribery by the lover on her first visit to him. Brooke found her in Boaistuau a kindly old woman, willing to aid her "nurse-child" in the secret love affair; he left her a typically garrulous, vulgar, sordid female attendant whose very wickedness amuses rather than repels. Shakespeare's whole conception of her character was caught from the pages of Brooke. Yet, as Mr. Munro says in an admirable discussion of the merits and defects of Brooke's work,[1] "There is nothing truly organic about the whole poem; its parts are out of proportion; it is loose in its construction, and vagarious in its progress. Its atmosphere is that of melodrama, and there is not one truly noble person in it."

Boaistuau's tale was again translated into English by William Painter under the title of *Rhomeo and Julietta* in the second volume of the *Palace of Pleasure* (1567). As already stated, this prose version of the tale follows closely Boaistuau's French, and it is not surprising that Shakespeare relied on the more vivacious, even though more prolix, narrative of Brooke rather than on Painter. However, it is probable that he did read Painter's novel before composing the drama.[2]

Was an English play on the subject written before Shakespeare's? This question seems to be answered affirmatively by Brooke's positive statement in the preface to his poem, "Though I saw the same argument lately set forth on stage with more commendation than I can look for — being there much better set forth than I have or can do — yet the same matter penned as it is may serve to like good effect." These words imply that it was an English rather than a foreign play that Brooke saw, yet this play, like the vast majority of its contemporary dramas, is no longer extant. If the play was still in existence thirty years after Brooke saw it, we may be sure, from all that we know of Shakespeare's habits of workmanship, that he would likely have taken advantage of any hint that he could get from reading this old drama or seeing it acted. For many years scholars have thought that this lost play, if ever recovered, would prove to be another one of his sources.

[1] Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet*, Introd., p. li.

[2] The problem is further discussed in Appendix C.

In its original form the play has not been recovered, nor is it likely to be. But recently Dr. Harold De Wolf Fuller has pointed out[1] that a well known Dutch play, *Romeo en Juliette*, published in 1634, and written by Jacob Struijs, is in all probability not a debased version founded on Shakespeare, as has been generally thought, but an almost literal translation of a pre-Shakespearian English play. If one accepts this statement, it will be difficult for him not to reach the further conclusions that Struijs's "original" was the lost play seen by Brooke as early as 1562, and that it served as a source for Shakespeare. For Dr. Fuller makes it clear that either Shakespeare knew the "original," or else Struijs was indebted to Brooke, Boaistuau, and Shakespeare, all three.

Acceptance of Dr. Fuller's theory requires belief in three propositions: *viz.*, (1) that a pre-Shakespearian English play of *Romeo and Juliet* existed, as one would infer from Brooke's statement; (2) that Shakespeare knew and made use of the play; (3) that Struijs translated into Dutch this early English play about 1630 in ignorance of Shakespeare's greater work on the same subject. Of these propositions the third is by far the most difficult of proof. Without attempting to follow in detail Dr. Fuller's subtle argument on this point let it suffice to say that he makes it certain either that Shakespeare adopted numerous hints, stage devices, and scenic arrangements from the earlier play, or that Struijs was indebted to Shakespeare. But these marks of the indebtedness of one playwright to the other are of such a nature as to impress any one who knows both Shakespeare and the earlier English drama with the strength of Dr. Fuller's contention. In numerous places the Dutch play agrees with Boaistuau's and with Brooke's versions of the story, but not with Shakespeare; that a Dutch dramatist should use these narrative versions as sources is unlikely. Besides, many of Struijs's lines contain just the hints and turns of expression that acted most like magic to Shakespeare's quick fancy. Had Struijs, on the other hand, known Shakespeare's work, he would almost certainly have made more use of it than he has done. But while one must admit that Dr. Fuller has suggested a rational solution for a series of baffling problems, yet, for the present at

[1] In *Modern Philology*, iv. 75–120 (1906). A brief summary of the Dutch play, based on Dr. Fuller's summary will be found in Appendix B of this volume. Prof. J. W. Cunliffe, in a note in *The Modern Language Review*, vii. 324 (1912), shows that Brooke was admitted to the plays of the Inns of Court at Christmas, 1561, and may then have seen the play that he mentions.

least, his conclusions must be accepted with caution. From their very nature they do not admit of the proof that attends some other results of Shakespearian research.

If Shakespeare, then, was indebted to Brooke's poem, to Painter's prose narrative, and probably also to the lost play on the same subject, the question arises as to the extent of his use of each source. Malone, though he was ignorant of Struijs, long ago settled all doubts in favor of Brooke. The names assigned to various characters by Shakespeare, the circumstance of Capulet's writing down the names of his guests, and scores of verbal similarities between the two versions point to Shakespeare's preference for the poetic version. To the older English play Dr. Fuller accounts Shakespeare indebted for suggestions as to Romeo's description of Juliet at the feast, for the meeting of the lovers by night, for Friar Laurence's soliloquy before his cell, for Tybalt's motive for attack on Romeo, for the visit of the Nurse to the Friar's cell during Romeo's lamentations, for the parting words of the lovers, and for the circumstance of Mercutio's death at Tybalt's hands. To Painter the debt is apparently much smaller than to either of the other sources, but in two or three incidents the language of Shakespeare supports the natural inference that at one time he had read Painter's novel.

4. CRITICAL APPRECIATION

All this accounting of items to show the dramatist's dependence on his predecessors may cause the reader to assign small credit to Shakespeare for what he has done in this play. Yet no course could involve greater misunderstandings of the master's art. Like other great literary men, particularly the Elizabethans, Shakespeare seldom or never takes the trouble to "make up" the stories with which he works. He is willing to borrow from any convenient material not only names and incidents for his drama, but suggestions for character development, hints for motives, and if the source chances to be another play, numerous bits of "stage business." The careful study of his work reveals a phenomenal memory for details of this type, and a yet more marvelous quickness in perception of the possibilities lying in a casual phrase and adaptable to the acted drama. Grasping at once the latent meaning of a mere turn of expression in what he reads or hears, he visualizes the situation as no one else has done. Then he moulds the separate incidents into a form approaching the perfection of nar-

rative and dramatic art. From his interpretation the characters and events in some familiar story become to our eyes so real and so vitalized that henceforth we associate this story with Shakespeare's name.

Supreme artistry of this type is illustrated in the play before us. From Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet* come all the essentials of Shakespeare's plot, and even the kernels of his phraseology in numerous lines. And yet in Shakespeare the entire conception of the men and women and their actions has been transformed, enriched, and purified; while the verses in which the characters speak are never the tedious, hobbling lines of Brooke, but often bursts of highest lyric poetry. Brooke's coloring of the story may be gathered from the words of his preface: "And to this end, good Reader, is this tragical matter written, to describe unto thee a couple of unfortunate lovers, thralling themselves to unhonest desire; neglecting the authority and advice of parents and friends; conferring their principal counsels with drunken gossips and superstitious friars (the naturally fit instruments of unchastity); attempting all adventures of peril for th' attaining of their wished lust; using auricular confession, the key of whoredom and treason, for furtherance of their purpose; abusing the honourable name of lawful marriage to cloak the shame of stolen contracts; finally by all means of unhonest life hasting to most unhappy death."[1] Shakespeare, taking the plot directly from Brooke, has made it world-famous in poetry and drama as a story of unsullied though passionate love. While the emotions are burning at no less intensity than those in the similar narratives of Troilus and Criseyde, and Tristan and Iseult, *Romeo and Juliet* differs from them in its strict adherence to moral laws and in its freedom from grosser elements. Moreover, Shakespeare has deftly suffused the play in a "tone color" of moonlit Italian gardens, in perfect harmony with the theme.

The work is more than a dramatic poem. Its undying interest on the stage from 1597 down to the present hour, when Miss Marlowe's interpretation of Juliet delights widely scattered audiences, attests its strong qualities as an acting drama. When one passes either from the tiresome account of Brooke or from the loosely constructed earlier dramas of Shakespeare to this tragedy, one is quick to note its organic nature, the rapidity of its movement, and the sureness of hand that characterizes most of its scenes. Despite

[1] Munro, p. lxvi.

some unmodern characteristics, on the boards to-day the *Romeo and Juliet*, acted by even a second-rate company, will obtain a strong reaction from many who are never struck spellbound by the magic of the poet's name. Its success as a stage play must be due to the human interest of its appeal.

Of Shakespeare's skill in creating humorous dramatic situations, two examples may suffice. Juliet, in Brooke's poem, laments Tybalt's death at Romeo's hand and denounces her kinsman's slayer in much the same language as she uses in iii. 2. Suddenly she checks herself and accuses "her cruel murthering tongue" of slandering her husband. Now Shakespeare presents that precise situation with this important difference: Juliet's abuse of her husband does not cease until she hears the Nurse echo her sentiments and exclaim, "Shame come to Romeo!" Immediately the wife is stung to reply, "Blister'd be thy tongue for such a wish," rebuking first the Nurse and then herself for uttering such words. The second situation, again involving the Nurse, is equally true to life but essentially comic, and the humor is worthy of Chaucer. To prevent Romeo from committing suicide on hearing his doom of banishment and to direct him to a path of safety, the Friar makes a speech of some fifty lines, pointing out the cowardice and foolishness of self-slaughter, and its inevitable consequence on Juliet. He concludes this rather lengthy harangue by telling the Nurse to inform Juliet that Romeo will visit her. In open-eyed astonishment the old woman ejaculates, not what we expect, but —

> "O Lord, I could have stay'd here all the night
> To hear good counsel: O, what learning is!"

Yet when critically examined as a tragedy, *Romeo and Juliet*, despite the excellent construction of its opening scene and the direct movement toward its catastrophe, falls below the plane of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and other plays belonging to the period of Shakespeare's finest art. Certain faults in the dramatic structure of *Romeo and Juliet*, critics have frankly recognized. It has been pointed out, for example, that the tragedy really turns upon accident, upon a succession of unfortunate incidents, any one of which might have resulted differently and wrought out ultimate happiness to hero and heroine. Now in Shakespeare's later tragedies the outcome does not depend on chance, but is the inevitable result of some trait in the hero's character. A less important structural blemish concerns the climax of this play. The counterplot

meets the main plot in the last scene of Act iii, where the heroine faces the alternative of immediate forced marriage with Paris, or disinheritance and threatened death from her father. At that moment no escape seems possible. But the turning point of the lovers' fortunes has come in an earlier scene marked by sharp excitement and rapid action, the rekindling of bitter hatred between the rival houses, the killing of two important characters, and the banishment of the hero from Verona. The juxtaposition of these two climaxes mars the unity of the whole. Other faults that we may find with the play, like the injection of low comedy into such a serious scene as iv. 5, the fondness of Mercutio and Friar Laurence for long, undramatic speeches, the digressions in iii. 5, resulting from satire on contemporary fashions, may be accredited to conventions of the time. Shakespeare is not Ibsen and does not attempt to reduce his plots to the simplest possible terms. That is to say, most imperfections are due either to Shakespeare's inexperience as a dramatist, or to Elizabethan habits of play-making.

Analysis of the characters reveals even more clearly the youthfulness of the author. Juliet, so thoroughly delightful in her girlishness, is the embodiment of unstained youthful passion. Her nature presents no complexities, and after her first meeting with Romeo she has but one interest in life. Her lover, on the other hand, draws from her all his spiritual strength, and as soon as he feels himself out of touch with her grows utterly hopeless. Renewed communion with Juliet transforms him into a man, direct, alert, and resourceful. News of her death begets desperate resolution. When the servant and Paris attempt to interfere with his course, they are brushed aside as boys. The womanly tenderness of his last speech marks no decline in his masculinity; he boldly drinks the poison, and after a dozen words lies dead embracing his wife's body. Each lover finds in the other one complete satisfaction for all ambitions and desires. The minor characters in the play serve mainly as foils to the larger figures. Phlegmatic Benvolio is opposed first to the fury of Tybalt, then to the melancholy of Romeo, and finally to the wit of Mercutio. Affectionate Lady Montague presents a complement to spiteful Lady Capulet. The impetuosity of the hero is well set off by the gentleness of his rival for Juliet's hand, and the opposition between them makes Romeo's killing of Paris a dramatic necessity. This creation of one artificial character to fit the needs of another again betrays the playwright's immaturity.

If this estimate be correct, the play is entitled to higher rank

as a sympathetic portrayal of youthful love than as a great world tragedy. The tone of its most exalted poetic passages would befit a romantic comedy like *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. With such comedies and not with the other tragedies, this drama should be compared, if we would realize its significance in the development of Shakespeare's art.

Judged simply as poetry, *Romeo and Juliet* takes a high place in English verse. The imperishable lines of the famous "balcony scene"; Juliet's passionate soliloquy while awaiting her husband's visit, a passage remarkable for its delicacy in treating a subject so closely akin to the sensual; the pathetic verses in which the lovers part at daybreak to meet no more — these are instances of love poetry of the highest artistic value. Mr. Gollancz has pointed out the strong lyric element in the complete and fragmentary sonnets, the epithalamium of Juliet, the suggestion of *aubade* on the morning after the marriage. Other types of poetry are seen in Mercutio's oft-quoted description of Queen Mab, in the moving scene where Juliet drinks the sleeping-potion after painting in realistic imagery the possible horrors attending her, in Romeo's terribly intense, compressed speeches throughout the last act. The intrinsic beauty of such passages can scarcely be pointed out to those whose appreciation does not arise from their own reading and study; but few to whom English poetry ever makes appeal will remain insensible to these lines.

"Here 's much to do with hate but more with love." Our real concern is with the two chief actors in the tragedy, and it matters little to us whether childish old Capulet and his ancient enemy will finally become reconciled. Most readers would prefer to follow the well-established custom of modern stage presentations and have the curtain rung down and the lights put out at the point where Juliet sheathes Romeo's dagger in her own bosom. From the lovers' standpoint this ending may be thought of as happy. The bond that unites them has proved sufficient to withstand the jarrings of family hatred and the naturally strong ties of filial obligation. It has enabled them to triumph over all outward circumstances, even over the resentment stirred by the slaying of a favorite kinsman. The very stars that have apparently conspired against the fortunes of the pair are at last defied. In their death Romeo and Juliet are not divided. Their love is immortal.

THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ESCALUS . . . . . Prince of Verona
PARIS . . A young nobleman, kinsman to the Prince
MONTAGUE } Heads of two houses, at variance with each
CAPULET } other
An Old Man . . . . . Cousin to Capulet
ROMEO . . . . . Son to Montague
MERCUTIO, Kinsman to the Prince, and friend to Romeo
BENVOLIO, Nephew to Montague, and friend to Romeo
TYBALT . . . . . Nephew to Lady Capulet
FRIAR LAURENCE }
FRIAR JOHN } . . . . . Franciscans
BALTHASAR . . . . . Servant to Romeo
SAMPSON }
GREGORY } . . . . . Servants to Capulet
PETER . . . . . Servant to Juliet's nurse
ABRAHAM . . . . . Servant to Montague
An Apothecary
Three Musicians
Page to Paris; another Page; an Officer

LADY MONTAGUE . . . . . Wife to Montague
LADY CAPULET . . . . . Wife to Capulet
JULIET . . . . . Daughter to Capulet
Nurse to Juliet

Citizens of Verona; several Men and Women, relations to both houses; Maskers, Guards, Watchmen, and Attendants.

Chorus

SCENE — VERONA: MANTUA

Romeo and Juliet

PROLOGUE

Enter Chorus

Chor. Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

[*Exit.*

ACT I

Scene I — *Verona. A public place*

Enter Sampson *and* Gregory *of the house of* Capulet, *armed with swords and bucklers*

Sam. Gregory, o' my word, we 'll not carry coals.

Gre. No, for then we should be colliers.

Sam. I mean, an we be in choler, we 'll draw.

Gre. Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o' the collar.

Sam. I strike quickly, being moved.

Gre. But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

Sam. A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

Gre. To move is to stir; and to be valiant is to stand: therefore, if thou art moved, thou runn'st away.

Sam. A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

Gre. That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall.

Sam. True; and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall: therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall.

Gre. The quarrel is between our masters and us their men.

Sam. 'T is all one, I will show myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids, and cut off their heads.

Gre. The heads of the maids?

Sam. Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maiden-heads; take it in what sense thou wilt.

Gre. They must take it in sense that feel it.

Sam. Me they shall feel while I am able to stand: and 't is known I am a pretty piece of flesh.

Gre. 'T is well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been poor John. Draw thy tool; here comes two of the house of the Montagues.

Sam. My naked weapon is out: quarrel, I will back thee.

Gre. How! turn thy back and run?

Sam. Fear me not.

Gre. No, marry; I fear thee!

Sam. Let us take the law of our sides; let them begin.

Gre. I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they list.

Sam. Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them; which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

Enter ABRAHAM *and* BALTHASAR

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sam. I do bite my thumb, sir.

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sam. [*Aside to* GRE.] Is the law of our side, if I say ay?

Gre. No.

Sam. No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir; but I bite my thumb, sir.

Gre. Do you quarrel, sir?

Abr. Quarrel, sir! no, sir.

Sam. If you do, sir, I am for you: I serve as good a man as you.

Abr. No better.

Sam. Well, sir.

Gre. Say "better": here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

Sam. Yes, better, sir.

Abr. You lie.

Sam. Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy swashing blow. [*They fight.*

Enter Benvolio

Ben. Part, fools!
Put up your swords; you know not what you do.
[*Beats down their swords.*

Enter Tybalt

Tyb. What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?
Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

Ben. I do but keep the peace: put up thy sword,
Or manage it to part these men with me.

Tyb. What, drawn, and talk of peace! I hate the word,
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:
Have at thee, coward. [*They fight.*

Enter several of both houses, who join the fray; then enter Citizens, *with clubs*

First Cit. Clubs, bills, and partisans! strike! beat them down!
Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

Enter CAPULET *in his gown, and* LADY CAPULET

Cap. What noise is this? Give me my long sword, ho!

La. Cap. A crutch, a crutch! Why call you for a sword?

Cap. My sword, I say! Old Montague is come,
And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

Enter MONTAGUE *and* LADY MONTAGUE

Mon. Thou villain Capulet, — Hold me not, let me go.

La. Mon. Thou shalt not stir a foot to seek a foe.

Enter PRINCE, *with* Attendants

Prin. Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners of this neighbour-stainéd steel, —
Will they not hear? What, ho! you men, you beasts,
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage
With purple fountains issuing from your veins,
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
Throw your mistemper'd weapons to the ground,
And hear the sentence of your movéd prince.
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,

Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets,
And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave beseeming ornaments,
To wield old partisans, in hands as old,
Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd hate:
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
For this time, all the rest depart away:
You, Capulet, shall go along with me;
And, Montague, come you this afternoon,
To know our further pleasure in this case,
To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

[*Exeunt all but Montague, Lady Montague, and Benvolio.*

Mon. Who set this ancient quarrel new abroach?
Speak, nephew, were you by, when it began?

Ben. Here were the servants of your adversary,
And yours, close fighting ere I did approach:
I drew to part them: in the instant came
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepared,
Which, as he breathed defiance to my ears,
He swung about his head and cut the winds,
Who, nothing hurt withal, hiss'd him in scorn:
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,
Came more and more and fought on part and part,
Till the prince came, who parted either part.

La. Mon. O, where is Romeo? saw you ~~him~~ to-day?
Right glad I am he was not at this fray.

Ben. Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,

A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad;
Where, underneath the grove of sycamore
That westward rooteth from the city's side,
So early walking did I see your son:
Towards him I made, but he was ware of me
And stole into the covert of the wood:
I, measuring his affections by my own,
That most are busied when they 're most alone,
Pursued my humour, not pursuing his,
And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.

Mon. Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs;
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the farthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son,
And private in his chamber pens himself,
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out
And makes himself an artificial night:
Black and portentous must this humour prove,
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

Ben. My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

Mon. I neither know it nor can learn of him.

Ben. Have you importuned him by any means?

Mon. Both by myself and many other friends:
But he, his own affections' counsellor,
Is to himself — I will not say how true —
But to himself so secret and so close,
So far from sounding and discovery,
As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,

Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.
Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow,
We would as willingly give cure as know.

Enter Romeo

Ben. See, where he comes: so please you, step aside;
I 'll know his grievance, or be much denied.
Mon. I would thou wert so happy by thy stay,
To hear true shrift. Come, madam, let 's away.
[*Exeunt Montague and Lady.*
Ben. Good morrow, cousin.
Rom. Is the day so young?
Ben. But new struck nine.
Rom. Ay me! sad hours seem long.
Was that my father that went hence so fast?
Ben. It was. What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?
Rom. Not having that, which, having, makes them short.
Ben. In love?
Rom. Out —
Ben. Of love?
Rom. Out of her favour, where I am in love.
Ben. Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!
Rom. Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!
Where shall we dine? O me! What fray was here?
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.
Here 's much to do with hate, but more with love.
Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate!

O any thing, of nothing first create!
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
Dost thou not laugh?
Ben. No, coz, I rather weep.
Rom. Good heart, at what?
Ben. At thy good heart's oppression.
Rom. Why, such is love's transgression.
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,
Which thou wilt propagate, to have it prest
With more of thine: this love that thou hast shown
Doth add more grief to too-much of mine own.
Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;
Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:
What is it else? a madness most discreet,
A choking gall and a preserving sweet.
Farewell, my coz.
Ben. Soft! I will go along;
An if you leave me so, you do me wrong.
Rom. Tut, I have lost myself; I am not here;
This is not Romeo, he 's some other where.
Ben. Tell me in sadness, who is that you love.
Rom. What, shall I groan, and tell thee?
Ben. Groan! why, no;
But sadly tell me who.
Rom. Bid a sick man in sadness make his will:
Ah, word ill urged to one that is so ill!
In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

Ben. I aim'd so near, when I supposed you loved.
Rom. A right good mark-man! And she 's fair I love.
Ben. A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.
Rom. Well, in that hit you miss: she 'll not be hit
With Cupid's arrow; she hath Dian's wit;
And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd,
From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.
She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,
Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold:
O, she is rich in beauty, only poor,
That when she dies with beauty dies her store.
Ben. Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste?
Rom. She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste,
For beauty starved with her severity
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.
She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,
To merit bliss by making me despair:
She hath forsworn to love, and in that vow
Do I live dead that live to tell it now.
Ben. Be ruled by me, forget to think of her.
Rom. O, teach me how I should forget to think.
Ben. By giving liberty unto thine eyes;
Examine other beauties.
Rom. 'T is the way
To call hers exquisite, in question more.
These happy masks that kiss fair ladies' brows
Being black put us in mind they hide the fair;

He that is strucken blind cannot forget
The precious treasure of his eyesight lost:
Show me a mistress that is passing fair,
What doth her beauty serve, but as a note
Where I may read who pass'd that passing fair?
Farewell: thou canst not teach me to forget.
Ben. I 'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *A Street*

Enter Capulet, Paris, *and* Servant

Cap. But Montague is bound as well as I,
In penalty alike; and 't is not hard, I think,
For men so old as we to keep the peace.
Par. Of honourable reckoning are you both;
And pity 't is you lived at odds so long.
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?
Cap. But saying o'er what I have said before:
My child is yet a stranger in the world;
She hath not seen the change of fourteen years:
Let two more summers wither in their pride,
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.
Par. Younger than she are happy mothers made.
Cap. And too soon marr'd are those so early made.
The earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she,
She is the hopeful lady of my earth:
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
My will to her consent is but a part;
An she agree, within her scope of choice

Lies my consent and fair according voice.
This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,
Whereto I have invited many a guest,
Such as I love; and you, among the store,
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
At my poor house look to behold this night
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light:
Such comfort as do lusty young men feel
When well-apparell'd April on the heel
Of limping winter treads, even such delight
Among fresh female buds shall you this night
Inherit at my house; hear all, all see,
And like her most whose merit most shall be:
Which on more view, of many mine being one
May stand in number, though in reckoning none.
Come, go with me. [*To Serv., giving a paper*] Go, sirrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona; find those persons out
Whose names are written there, and to them say,
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

[*Exeunt Capulet and Paris.*

Serv. Find them out whose names are written here! It is written, that the shoemaker should meddle with his yard, and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his pencil, and the painter with his nets; but I am sent to find those persons whose names are here writ, and can never find what names the writing person hath here writ. I must to the learned. — In good time.

Enter Benvolio *and* Romeo

Ben. Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning,
One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;
Turn giddy, and be holp by backward turning;
One desperate grief cures with another's languish:
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.

Rom. Your plaintain-leaf is excellent for that.

Ben. For what, I pray thee?

Rom. For your broken shin.

Ben. Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

Rom. Not mad, but bound more than a madman is;
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipp'd and tormented and — God-den, good fellow.

Serv. God gi' god-den. I pray, sir, can you read?

Rom. Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

Serv. Perhaps you have learned it without book: but, I pray, can you read any thing you see?

Rom. Ay, if I know the letters, and the language.

Serv. Ye say honestly: rest you merry!

Rom. Stay, fellow; I can read. [*Reads.*

"Signior Martino and his wife and daughters; County Anselme and his beauteous sisters; the lady widow of Vitruvio; Signior Placentio and his lovely nieces; Mercutio and his brother Valentine; mine uncle Capulet, his wife, and daughters; my fair niece Rosaline; Livia; Signior Va-

lentio, and his cousin Tybalt; Lucio and the lively Helena."

A fair assembly: whither should they come?

Serv. Up.

Rom. Whither?

Serv. To supper; to our house.

Rom. Whose house?

Serv. My master's.

Rom. Indeed, I should have ask'd you that before.

Serv. Now I 'll tell you without asking: my master is the great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray, come and crush a cup of wine. Rest you merry! [*Exit.*

Ben. At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
Sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so lovest,
With all the admired beauties of Verona:
Go thither; and with unattainted eye
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

Rom. When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires;
And these, who, often drown'd, could never die,
Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars!
One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

Ben. Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself poised with herself in either eye;
But in that crystal scales let there be weigh'd
Your lady's love against some other maid
That I will show you shining at this feast,

And she shall scant show well that now shows best.

Rom. I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendour of mine own. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III — *A room in Capulet's house*

Enter Lady Capulet *and* Nurse

La. Cap. Nurse, where 's my daughter? call her forth to me.

Nurse. Now, by my maidenhead at twelve year old,
I bade her come. What, lamb! what, lady-bird!
God forbid! Where 's this girl? What, Juliet!

Enter Juliet

Jul. How now! who calls?

Nurse. Your mother.

Jul. Madam, I am here.
What is your will?

La. Cap. This is the matter: — nurse, give leave awhile,
We must talk in secret: — nurse, come back again;
I have remember'd me, thou 's hear our counsel.
Thou know'st my daughter 's of a pretty age.

Nurse. Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

La. Cap. She 's not fourteen.

Nurse. I 'll lay fourteen of my teeth, —
And yet, to my teen be it spoken, I have but four, —
She is not fourteen. How long is it now
To Lammas-tide?

La. Cap. A fortnight and odd days.

Nurse. Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she — God rest all Christian souls! —
Were of an age: well, Susan is with God;
She was too good for me: but, as I said,
On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;
That shall she, marry; I remember it well.
'T is since the earthquake now eleven years;
And she was wean'd, — I never shall forget it, —
Of all the days of the year, upon that day:
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall:
My lord and you were then at Mantua: —
Nay, I do bear a brain: — but, as I said,
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
Of my dug and felt it bitter, pretty fool,
To see it tetchy, and fall out with the dug!
" Shake " quoth the dove-house: 't was no need, I trow,
To bid me trudge:
And since that time it is eleven years;
For then she could stand alone; nay, by the rood,
She could have run and waddled all about;
For even the day before, she broke her brow:
And then my husband — God be with his soul!
'A was a merry man — took up the child:
" Yea," quoth he, " dost thou fall upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit;
Wilt thou not, Jule? " and, by my holidame,
The pretty wretch left crying and said " Ay."
To see, now, how a jest shall come about!

I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
I never should forget it: "Wilt thou not, Jule?" quoth he;
And, pretty fool, it stinted, and said "Ay."

La. Cap. Enough of this; I pray thee, hold thy peace.

Nurse. Yes, madam: yet I cannot choose but laugh,
To think it should leave crying, and say "Ay."
And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow
A bump as big as a young cockerel's stone;
A parlous knock; and it cried bitterly:
"Yea," quoth my husband, "fall'st upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward, when thou comest to age;
Wilt thou not, Jule?" it stinted, and said "Ay."

Jul. And stint thou too, I pray thee, nurse, say I.

Nurse. Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace!
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nursed:
An I might live to see thee married once,
I have my wish.

La. Cap. Marry, that "marry" is the very theme
I came to talk of. Tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your disposition to be married?

Jul. It is an honour that I dream not of.

Nurse. An honour! were not I thine only nurse,
I would say thou hadst suck'd wisdom from thy teat.

La. Cap. Well, think of marriage now; younger than you,
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,

Are made already mothers: by my count,
I was your mother much upon these years
That you are now a maid. Thus, then, in brief:
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

Nurse. A man, young lady! lady, such a man
As all the world — why, he 's a man of wax.

La. Cap. Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

Nurse. Nay, he 's a flower; in faith, a very flower.

La. Cap. What say you? can you love the gentleman?
This night you shall behold him at our feast;
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
Examine every several lineament
And see how one another lends content,
And what obscured in this fair volume lies,
Find written in the margent of his eyes.
This precious book of love, this unbound lover,
To beautify him, only lacks a cover:
The fish lives in the sea, and 't is much pride
For fair without the fair within to hide:
That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;
So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him, making yourself no less.

Nurse. No less! nay, bigger; women grow by men.

La. Cap. Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

Jul. I 'll look to like, if looking liking move:

But no more deep will I endart mine eye
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

Enter a Servant

Serv. Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you called, my young lady asked for, the nurse cursed in the pantry, and everything in extremity. I must hence to wait; I beseech you, follow straight.

La. Cap. We follow thee. [*Exit Servant.*] Juliet, the county stays.

Nurse. Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *A Street*

Enter Romeo, Mercutio, Benvolio, *with five or six* Maskers, Torch-bearers, *and others*

Rom. What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?
Or shall we on without apology?

Ben. The date is out of such prolixity:
We 'll have no Cupid hoodwink'd with a scarf,
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,
Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper;
Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke
After the prompter, for our entrance:
But let them measure us by what they will;
We 'll measure them a measure, and be gone.

Rom. Give me a torch: I am not for this ambling;
Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

Mer. Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

Rom. Not I, believe me: you have dancing shoes
With nimble soles: I have a soul of lead
So stakes me to the ground I cannot move.

Mer. You are a lover; borrow Cupid's wings,
And soar with them above a common bound.

Rom. I am too sore enpiercéd with his shaft
To soar with his light feathers, and so bound,
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe:
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

Mer. And, to sink in it, should you burden love;
Too great oppression for a tender thing.

Rom. Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.

Mer. If love be rough with you, be rough with love;
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.
Give me a case to put my visage in:
A visor for a visor! what care I
What curious eye doth quote deformities?
Here are the beetle-brows shall blush for me.

Ben. Come, knock and enter; and no sooner in,
But every man betake him to his legs.

Rom. A torch for me: let wantons light of heart
Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels,
For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase;
I 'll be a candle-holder, and look on.
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.

Mer. Tut, dun 's the mouse, the constable's own word:
If thou art dun, we 'll draw thee from the mire
Of this sir-reverence love, wherein thou stick'st
Up to the ears. Come, we burn daylight, ho!
Rom. Nay, that 's not so.
Mer. I mean, sir, in delay
We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day.
Take our good meaning, for our judgment sits
Five times in that ere once in our five wits.
Rom. And we mean well in going to this mask;
But 't is no wit to go.
Mer. Why, may one ask?
Rom. I dream'd a dream to-night.
Mer. And so did I.
Rom. Well, what was yours?
Mer. That dreamers often lie.
Rom. In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.
Mer. O, then, I see, Queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes,
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the forefinger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
The traces of the smallest spider's web,
The collars of the moonshine's watery beams,
Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,

Not half so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid;
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight,
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees,
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are:
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail
Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,
Then dreams he of another benefice:
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
And, being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
That plats the manes of horses in the night,
And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,
Which once untangled much misfortune bodes:
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage:

This is she —

Rom. Peace, peace! Mercutio, peace!
Thou talk'st of nothing.

Mer. True, I talk of dreams,
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,
Which is as thin of substance as the air
And more inconstant than the wind, who wooes
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,
Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.

Ben. This wind you talk of, blows us from ourselves;
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

Rom. I fear, too early; for my mind misgives
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels and expire the term
Of a despiséd life closed in my breast,
By some vile forfeit of untimely death.
But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail! On, lusty gentlemen.

Ben. Strike, drum. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V — *A hall in Capulet's house*

Musicians *waiting.* *Enter* Serving-men, *with napkins*

First Serv. Where 's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? he shift a trencher? he scrape a trencher!

Sec. Serv. When good manners shall lie all in

one or two men's hands, and they unwashed too, 't is a foul thing.

First Serv. Away with the joint-stools, remove the court-cupboard, look to the plate. Good thou, save me a piece of marchpane; and, as thou lovest me, let the porter let in Susan Grindstone and Nell. Antony, and Potpan!

Sec. Serv. Ay, boy, ready.

First Serv. You are looked for and called for, asked for and sought for, in the great chamber.

Sec. Serv. We cannot be here and there too. Cheerly, boys; be brisk awhile, and the longer liver take all.

Enter Capulet, *with* Juliet *and others of his house, meeting the* Guests *and* Maskers

Cap. Welcome, gentlemen! ladies that have their toes
Unplagued with corns will have a bout with you.
Ah ha, my mistresses! which of you all
Will now deny to dance? she that makes dainty,
She, I 'll swear, hath corns; am I come near ye now?
Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day
That I have worn a visor, and could tell
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,
Such as would please: 't is gone, 't is gone, 't is gone:
You are welcome, gentlemen! Come, musicians, play.
A hall, a hall! give room! and foot it, girls.
[*Music plays, and they dance.*
More light, you knaves; and turn the tables up,

And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot.
Ah, sirrah, this unlook'd-for sport comes well.
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet;
For you and I are past our dancing-days:
How long is 't now, since last yourself and I
Were in a mask?
Sec. Cap. By 'r lady, thirty years.
Cap. What, man! 't is not so much, 't is not so much:
'T is since the nuptial of Lucentio,
Come pentecost as quickly as it will,
Some five and twenty years; and then we mask'd.
Sec. Cap. 'T is more, 't is more: his son is elder, sir;
His son is thirty.
Cap. Will you tell me that?
His son was but a ward two years ago.
Rom. [*To a Serving-man*] What lady is that, which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight?
Serv. I know not, sir.
Rom. O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear;
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
The measure done, I 'll watch her place of stand,
And, touching hers, make blesséd my rude hand.
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

Tyb. This, by his voice, should be a Montague.
Fetch me my rapier, boy. What dares the slave
Come hither, cover'd with an antic face,
To fleer and scorn at our solemnity?
Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

Cap. Why, how now, kinsman! wherefore storm you so?

Tyb. Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe,
A villain that is hither come in spite,
To scorn at our solemnity this night.

Cap. Young Romeo is it?

Tyb. 'T is he, that villain Romeo.

Cap. Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone;
He bears him like a portly gentleman;
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him
To be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth:
I would not for the wealth of all this town
Here in my house do him disparagement:
Therefore be patient, take no note of him:
It is my will, the which if thou respect,
Show a fair presence and put off these frowns,
An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

Tyb. It fits, when such a villain is a guest:
I 'll not endure him.

Cap. He shall be endured:
What, goodman boy! I say, he shall: go to;
Am I the master here, or you? go to.
You 'll not endure him! God shall mend my soul!
You 'll make a mutiny among my guests!
You will set cock-a-hoop! you 'll be the man!

Tyb. Why, uncle, 't is a shame.

Cap. Go to, go to;
You are a saucy boy: is 't so, indeed?
This trick may chance to scathe you, I know what:
You must contrary me! marry, 't is time.
Well said, my hearts! You are a princox; go:
Be quiet, or — More light, more light! For shame!
I 'll make you quiet. What, cheerly, my hearts!
Tyb. Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting
Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.
I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall
Now seeming sweet convert to bitter gall. [*Exit.*
Rom. [*To Juliet*] If I profane with my unworthiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this:
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.
Jul. Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.
Rom. Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?
Jul. Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.
Rom. O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;
They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.
Jul. Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

Rom. Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.
Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purged.
Jul. Then have my lips the sin that they have took.
Rom. Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urged!
Give me my sin again.
Jul. You kiss by the book.
Nurse. Madam, your mother craves a word with you.
Rom. What is her mother?
Nurse. Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise, and virtuous:
I nursed her daughter, that you talk'd withal;
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the chinks.
Rom. Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.
Ben. Away, be gone; the sport is at the best.
Rom. Ay, so I fear; the more is my unrest.
Cap. Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone;
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.
Is it e'en so? Why, then, I thank you all;
I thank you, honest gentlemen; good night.
More torches here! Come on then, let 's to bed.
Ah, sirrah, by my fay, it waxes late;
I 'll to my rest. [*Exeunt all but Juliet and Nurse.*
Jul. Come hither, nurse. What is yond gentleman?
Nurse. The son and heir of old Tiberio.

Jul. What 's he that now is going out of door?
Nurse. Marry, that, I think, be young Petrucio.
Jul. What 's he that follows there, that would not dance?
Nurse. I know not.
Jul. Go, ask his name: if he be married,
My grave is like to be my wedding bed.
Nurse. His name is Romeo, and a Montague;
The only son of your great enemy.
Jul. My only love sprung from my only hate!
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathéd enemy.
Nurse. What 's this? what 's this?
Jul. A rhyme I learn'd even now
Of one I danced withal.
[*One calls within* " Juliet."
Nurse. Anon, anon!
Come, let 's away; the strangers all are gone.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

PROLOGUE

Enter Chorus

Chor. Now old desire doth in his death-bed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir;
That fair for which love groaned for and would die,
With tender Juliet match'd, is now not fair.
Now Romeo is beloved, and loves again,
Alike bewitchéd by the charm of looks,
But to his foe supposed he must complain,
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks:
Being held a foe, he may not have access
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear;
And she as much in love, her means much less
To meet her new-belovéd any where:
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,
Tempering extremities with extreme sweet. [*Exit.*

Scene I — *A lane by the wall of Capulet's orchard*

Enter Romeo

Rom. Can I go forward when my heart is here?
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy centre out.
[*He climbs the wall, and leaps down within it.*

Enter Benvolio *and* Mercutio

Ben. Romeo! my cousin Romeo!
Mer. He is wise;
And on my life, hath stol'n him home to bed.

Ben. He ran this way, and leap'd this orchard wall:
Call, good Mercutio.
Mer. Nay, I 'll conjure too.
Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh:
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied;
Cry but "Ay me!" pronounce but "love" and "dove;"
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
One nick-name for her purblind son and heir,
Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim,
When King Cophetua loved the beggar-maid!
He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not;
The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,
By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
That in thy likeness thou appear to us!
Ben. An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.
Mer. This cannot anger him: 't would anger him
To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle
Of some strange nature, letting it there stand
Till she had laid it and conjured it down;
That were some spite: my invocation
Is fair and honest, and in his mistress' name
I conjure only but to raise up him.
Ben. Come, he hath hid himself among these trees,
To be consorted with the humorous night:
Blind is his love and best befits the dark.

Mer. If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
Now will he sit under a medlar-tree,
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit
As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone.
O, Romeo, that she were, O, that she were
An open *et cætera*, thou a poperin pear!
Romeo, good night: I 'll to my truckle-bed;
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep:
Come, shall we go?
Ben. Go, then; for 't is in vain
To seek him here that means not to be found.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *Capulet's orchard*

Enter Romeo

Rom. He jests at scars that never felt a wound.
[*Juliet appears above, at a window.*
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.
It is my lady, O, it is my love!
O, that she knew she were!
She speaks, yet she says nothing: what of that?
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.
I am too bold, 't is not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright,
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O! that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

Jul. Ay me!

Rom. She speaks:
O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a wingéd messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturnéd wondering eyes
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

Jul. O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I 'll no longer be a Capulet.

Rom. [*Aside.*] Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

Jul. 'T is but thy name that is my enemy;
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What 's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What 's in a name? that which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
And for that name which is no part of thee
Take all myself.

Rom. I take thee at thy word:
Call me but love, and I 'll be new baptized;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

Jul. What man art thou that thus bescreen'd in night
So stumblest on my counsel?

Rom. By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am:
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee;
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

Jul. My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound:
Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?

Rom. Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

Jul. How cam'st thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

Rom. With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;
For stony limits cannot hold love out,
And what love can do, that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

Jul. If they do see thee, they will murder thee.
Rom. Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.
Jul. I would not for the world they saw thee here.
Rom. I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;
And but thou love me, let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.
Jul. By whose direction found'st thou out this place?
Rom. By love, who first did prompt me to inquire;
He lent me counsel and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.
Jul. Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "Ay,"
And I will take thy word: yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I 'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,

So thou wilt woo; but, else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,
And therefore thou mayst think my 'haviour light:
But trust me, gentleman, I 'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
My true love's passion: therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discoveréd.
Rom. Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops —
Jul. O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.
Rom. What shall I swear by?
Jul. Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I 'll believe thee.
Rom. If my heart's dear love —
Jul. Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night:
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say, " It lightens." Sweet, good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!
Rom. O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Jul. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?
Rom. The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.
Jul. I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:
And yet I would it were to give again.
Rom. Wouldst thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?
Jul. But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have:
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.
[*Nurse calls within.*
I hear some noise within; dear love, adieu!
Anon, good nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again. [*Exit, above.*
Rom. O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard,
Being in night, all this is but a dream,
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

Re-enter Juliet, *above*

Jul. Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honourable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,
By one that I 'll procure to come to thee,
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;
And all my fortunes at thy foot I 'll lay,
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.
Nurse. [*Within*] Madam!

Jul. I come, anon. — But if thou mean'st not well,
I do beseech thee —
Nurse. [*Within*] Madam!
Jul. By and by, I come: —
To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief:
To-morrow will I send.
Rom. So thrive my soul —
Jul. A thousand times good night! [*Exit, above.*
Rom. A thousand times the worse, to want thy light.
Love goes toward love, as school-boys from their books,
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks. [*Retiring.*

Re-enter Juliet, *above*

Jul. Hist! Romeo, hist! O, for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!
Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,
With repetition of my Romeo's name.
Rom. It is my soul that calls upon my name:
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
Like softest music to attending ears!
Jul. Romeo!
Rom. My dear?
Jul. At what o'clock to-morrow
Shall I send to thee?

Rom. At the hour of nine.

Jul. I will not fail: 't is twenty years till then.
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

Rom. Let me stand here till thou remember it.

Jul. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Remembering how I love thy company.

Rom. And I 'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.

Jul. 'T is almost morning; I would have thee gone:
And yet no further than a wanton's bird;
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

Rom. I would I were thy bird.

Jul. Sweet, so would I:
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good night till it be morrow.
[*Exit above.*

Rom. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!
Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!
Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell,
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell. [*Exit.*

Scene III — *Friar Laurence's cell*

Enter Friar Laurence, *with a basket*

Fri. L. The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,
Chequering the eastern clouds with streaks of light,
And fleckéd darkness like a drunkard reels
From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels:
Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye,
The day to cheer and night's dank dew to dry,
I must up-fill this osier cage of ours
With baleful weeds and precious-juicéd flowers.
The earth that 's nature's mother is her tomb;
What is her burying grave that is her womb,
And from her womb children of divers kind
We sucking on her natural bosom find,
Many for many virtues excellent,
None but for some and yet all different.
O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:
For nought so vile that on the earth doth live
But to the earth some special good doth give,
Nor aught so good, but, strained from that fair use
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;
And vice sometimes by action dignified.
Within the infant rind of this small flower
Poison hath residence and medicine power:
For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part;
Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart
Two such opposéd kings encamp them still

In man as well as herbs, grace, and rude will;
And where the worser is predominant,
Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

Enter Romeo

Rom. Good morrow, father.
Fri. L. Benedicite!
What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?
Young son, it argues a distemper'd head
So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed:
Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,
And where care lodges, sleep will never lie;
But where unbruiséd youth with unstuff'd brain
Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign:
Therefore thy earliness doth me assure
Thou art up-roused by some distemperature;
Or if not so, then here I hit it right,
Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.
Rom. That last is true; the sweeter rest was mine.
Fri. L. God pardon sin! wast thou with Rosaline?
Rom. With Rosaline, my ghostly father? no;
I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.
Fri. L. That 's my good son: but where hast thou been, then?
Rom. I 'll tell thee, ere thou ask it me again.
I have been feasting with mine enemy,
Where on a sudden one hath wounded me,
That 's by me wounded: both our remedies
Within thy help and holy physic lies:
I bear no hatred, blesséd man, for, lo,
My intercession likewise steads my foe.

Fri. L. Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift;
Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.
Rom. Then plainly know, my heart's dear love is set
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine;
And all combined, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage: when and where and how
We met, we woo'd and made exchange of vow,
I 'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us to-day.
Fri. L. Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!
Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.
Jesu Maria, what a deal of brine
Hath wash'd thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!
How much salt water thrown away in waste,
To season love, that of it doth not taste!
The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,
Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears;
Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet:
If e'er thou wast thyself and these woes thine,
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline:
And art thou changed? pronounce this sentence, then,
Women may fall, when there 's no strength in men.
Rom. Thou chid'st me oft for loving Rosaline.
Fri. L. For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.
Rom. And bad'st me bury love.
Fri. L. Not in a grave,

To lay one in, another out to have.

Rom. I pray thee, chide not: she whom I love now
Doth grace for grace and love for love allow;
The other did not so.

Fri. L. O, she knew well
Thy love did read by rote and could not spell.
But come, young waverer, come, go with me,
In one respect I 'll thy assistant be;
For this alliance may so happy prove,
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

Rom. O, let us hence; I stand on sudden haste.

Fri. L. Wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *A Street*

Enter Benvolio *and* Mercutio

Mer. Where the devil should this Romeo be?
Came he not home to-night?

Ben. Not to his father's; I spoke with his man.

Mer. Ah, that same pale hard-hearted wench, that Rosaline,
Torments him so, that he will sure run mad.

Ben. Tybalt, the kinsman of old Capulet,
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

Mer. A challenge, on my life.

Ben. Romeo will answer it.

Mer. Any man that can write may answer a letter.

Ben. Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he dares, being dared.

Mer. Alas, poor Romeo! he is already dead;

stabbed with a white wench's black eye; shot thorough the ear with a love-song; the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft; and is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

Ben. Why, what is Tybalt?

Mer. More than prince of cats, I can tell you. O, he is the courageous captain of complements. He fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance, and proportion; rests me his minim rest, one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button, a duellist, a duellist; a gentleman of the very first house, of the first and second cause: ah, the immortal *passado!* the *punto reverso!* the *hai!*

Ben. The what?

Mer. The pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasticoes; these new tuners of accents! "By Jesu, a very good blade! a very tall man! a very good whore!" Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these perdona-mi's who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench? O, their bones, their bones!

Enter Romeo

Ben. Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

Mer. Without his roe, like a dried herring: O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified! Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flowed in: Laura to his lady was a kitchen-wench; marry, she had a better love to be-rhyme her; Dido a dowdy;

Cleopatra a gipsy; Helen and Hero hildings and harlots; Thisbe a grey eye or so, but not to the purpose. Signior Romeo, *bon jour!* there 's a French salutation to your French slop. You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

Rom. Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you?

Mer. The slip, sir, the slip; can you not conceive?

Rom. Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great; and in such a case as mine a man may strain courtesy.

Mer. That 's as much as to say, such a case as yours constrains a man to bow in the hams.

Rom. Meaning, to court'sy.

Mer. Thou hast most kindly hit it.

Rom. A most courteous exposition.

Mer. Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

Rom. Pink for flower.

Mer. Right.

Rom. Why, then is my pump well flowered.

Mer. Well said: follow me this jest now till thou hast worn out thy pump, that when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain after the wearing sole singular.

Rom. O single-soled jest, solely singular for the singleness.

Mer. Come between us, good Benvolio; my wits faint.

Rom. Switch and spurs, switch and spurs; or I 'll cry a match.

Mer. Nay, if thy wits run the wild-goose chase,

I am done; for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits than, I am sure, I have in my whole five: was I with you there for the goose?

Rom. Thou wast never with me for any thing when thou wast not there for the goose.

Mer. I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

Rom. Nay, good goose, bite not.

Mer. Thy wit is a very bitter sweeting; it is a most sharp sauce.

Rom. And is it not well served in to a sweet goose?

Mer. O, here 's a wit of cheveril, that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad!

Rom. I stretch it out for that word " broad; " which added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

Mer. Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature: for this drivelling love is like a great natural, that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.

Ben. Stop there, stop there.

Mer. Thou desirest me to stop in my tale against the hair.

Ben. Thou wouldst else have made thy tale large.

Mer. O, thou art deceived; I would have made it short; for I was come to the whole depth of my tale; and meant, indeed, to occupy the argument no longer.

Rom. Here 's goodly gear!

Enter Nurse *and* Peter

Mer. A sail, a sail!

Ben. Two, two; a shirt and a smock.

Nurse. Peter!

Peter. Anon!

Nurse. My fan, Peter.

Mer. Good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan 's the fairer face.

Nurse. God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

Mer. God ye good den, fair gentlewoman.

Nurse. Is it good den?

Mer. 'T is no less, I tell you; for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

Nurse. Out upon you! what a man are you!

Rom. One, gentlewoman, that God hath made for himself to mar.

Nurse. By my troth, it is well said; " for himself to mar," quoth 'a? Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

Rom. I can tell you; but young Romeo will be older when you have found him than he was when you sought him: I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

Nurse. You say well.

Mer. Yea, is the worst well? very well took, i' faith; wisely, wisely.

Nurse. If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you.

Ben. She will indite him to some supper.

Mer. A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho!

Rom. What hast thou found?

Mer. No hare, sir; unless a hare, sir, in a lenten pie, that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent. [*Sings.*

"An old hare hoar,
And an old hare hoar,
Is very good meat in lent:
But a hare that is hoar
Is too much for a score,
When it hoars ere it be spent."

Romeo, will you come to your father's? we 'll to dinner, thither.

Rom. I will follow you.

Mer. Farewell, ancient lady; farewell, [*singing*] "lady, lady, lady."

[*Exeunt Mercutio and Benvolio.*

Nurse. Marry, farewell! I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery?

Rom. A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk, and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

Nurse. An 'a speak anything against me, I 'll take him down, an 'a were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks; and if I cannot, I 'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills; I am none of his skains-mates. And thou must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

Peter. I saw no man use you at his pleasure; if I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you: I dare draw as soon as another

man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel, and the law on my side.

Nurse. Now, afore God, I am so vexed, that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave! Pray you, sir, a word; and as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire you out; what she bade me say, I will keep to myself: but first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her in a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, as they say: for the gentlewoman is young; and, therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

Rom. Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee —

Nurse. Good heart! and, i' faith, I will tell her as much: Lord, Lord, she will be a joyful woman.

Rom. What wilt thou tell her, nurse? thou dost not mark me.

Nurse. I will tell her, sir, that you do protest; which, as I take it, is a gentlemanlike offer.

Rom. Bid her devise
Some means to come to shrift this afternoon;
And there she shall at Friar Laurence' cell
Be shrived, and married. Here is for thy pains.

Nurse. No, truly, sir; not a penny.

Rom. Go to; I say you shall.

Nurse. This afternoon, sir? well, she shall be there.

Rom. And stay, good nurse; behind the abbey wall:

Within this hour my man shall be with thee,
And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair;
Which to the high top-gallant of my joy
Must be my convoy in the secret night.
Farewell; be trusty, and I 'll quit thy pains:
Farewell; commend me to thy mistress.

Nurse. Now God in heaven bless thee! Hark you, sir.

Rom. What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

Nurse. Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say,
Two may keep counsel, putting one away?

Rom. I warrant thee, my man 's as true as steel.

Nurse. Well, sir; my mistress is the sweetest lady — Lord, Lord! when 't was a little prating thing: — O, there is a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife aboard; but she, good soul, had as lief see a toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes and tell her that Paris is the properer man; but, I 'll warrant you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any clout in the versal world. Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?

Rom. Ay, nurse; what of that? both with an R.

Nurse. Ah, mocker, that 's the dog's name; R is for the — No; I know it begins with some other letter: — and she hath the prettiest sententious of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.

Rom. Commend me to thy lady.

Nurse. Ay, a thousand times. [*Exit Romeo.*] Peter!

Pet. Anon!

Nurse. Peter, take my fan, and go before, and apace. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V — *Capulet's orchard*

Enter Juliet

Jul. The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse;
In half an hour she promised to return.
Perchance she cannot meet him: that 's not so.
O, she is lame! love's heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,
Driving back shadows over louring hills:
Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.
Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
Of this day's journey, and from nine till twelve
Is three long hours, yet she is not come.
Had she affections and warm youthful blood,
She would be as swift in motion as a ball;
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,
And his to me:
But old folks, many feign as they were dead;
Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.
O God, she comes!

Enter Nurse *and* Peter

O honey nurse, what news?
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

Nurse. Peter, stay at the gate. [*Exit Peter.*

Jul. Now, good sweet nurse, — O Lord, why look'st thou sad?
Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;

If good, thou shamest the music of sweet news
By playing it to me with so sour a face.

Nurse. I am aweary, give me leave awhile:
Fie, how my bones ache! What a jaunt have I had!

Jul. I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news.
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak; good, good nurse, speak.

Nurse. Jesu, what haste? can you not stay awhile?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

Jul. How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
To say to me that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.
Is thy news good, or bad? answer to that;
Say either, and I 'll stay the circumstance:
Let me be satisfied, is 't good or bad?

Nurse. Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not how to choose a man: Romeo! no, not he; though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body, though they be not to be talked on, yet they are past compare: he is not the flower of courtesy, but, I 'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb. Go thy ways, wench; serve God. What, have you dined at home?

Jul. No, no: but all this did I know before. What says he of our marriage? what of that?

Nurse. Lord, how my head aches! what a head have I!

It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
My back o' t' other side, — O, my back, my back!
Beshrew your heart for sending me about,
To catch my death with jaunting up and down!
Jul. I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?
Nurse. Your love says like an honest gentleman, and a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and, I warrant, a virtuous, — Where is your mother?
Jul. Where is my mother! why, she is within;
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!
" Your love says like an honest gentleman,
Where is your mother? "
Nurse. O, God's lady dear!
Are you so hot? marry, come up, I trow;
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.
Jul. Here 's such a coil! come, what says Romeo?
Nurse. Have you got leave to go to shrift today?
Jul. I have.
Nurse. Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell;
There stays a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They 'll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird's nest soon, when it is dark:
I am the drudge and toil in your delight,

But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go; I 'll to dinner; hie you to the cell.
Jul. Hie to high fortune! Honest nurse, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI — *Friar Laurence's cell*

Enter Friar Laurence *and* Romeo

Fri. L. So smile the heavens upon this holy act,
That after hours with sorrow chide us not!
Rom. Amen, amen! but come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
That one short minute gives me in her sight:
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love-devouring death do what he dare;
It is enough I may but call her mine.
Fri. L. These violent delights have violent ends
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder,
Which as they kiss consume: the sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness
And in the taste confounds the appetite:
Therefore love moderately; long love doth so;
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

Enter Juliet

Here comes the lady: O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint:
A lover may bestride the gossamer
That idles in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall; so light is vanity.
Jul. Good even to my ghostly confessor.

Fri. L. Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

Jul. As much to him, else is his thanks too much.

Rom. Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
Be heaped like mine and that thy skill be more
To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbour air, and let rich music's tongue
Unfold the imagined happiness that both
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

Jul. Conceit, more rich in matter than in words, 30
Brags of his substance, not of ornament:
They are but beggars that can count their worth;
But my true love is grown to such excess
I cannot sum up sum of half my wealth.

Fri. L. Come, come with me, and we will make short work;
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone
Till holy church incorporate two in one. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

Scene I — *A public place*

Enter Mercutio, Benvolio, Page, *and* Servants

Ben. I pray thee, good Mercutio, let 's retire:
The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,
And, if we meet, we shall not scape a brawl;
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

Mer. Thou art like one of those fellows that when he enters the confines of a tavern claps me his sword upon the table and says "God send me no need of thee!" and by the operation of the second cup draws it on the drawer, when indeed there is no need.

Ben. Am I like such a fellow?

Mer. Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood, as any in Italy, and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved.

Ben. And what to?

Mer. Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! why, thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard, than thou hast: thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes: what eye but such an eye would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of

meat, and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg for quarrelling: thou hast quarrelled with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun: didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? with another, for tying his new shoes with old riband? and yet thou wilt tutor me from quarrelling!

Ben. An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee-simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

Mer. The fee-simple! O simple!

Ben. By my head, here come the Capulets.

Mer. By my heel, I care not.

Enter Tybalt *and others*

Tyb. Follow me close, for I will speak to them.

Gentlemen, good den: a word with one of you.

Mer. And but one word with one of us? couple it with something; make it a word and a blow.

Tyb. You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, an you will give me occasion.

Mer. Could you not take some occasion without giving?

Tyb. Mercutio, thou consort'st with Romeo, —

Mer. Consort! what, dost thou make us minstrels? an thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords: here 's my fiddlestick; here 's that shall make you dance. 'Zounds, consort!

Ben. We talk here in the public haunt of men: Either withdraw unto some private place,

And reason coldly of your grievances,
Or else depart; here all eyes gaze on us.

Mer. Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze;
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

Enter Romeo

Tyb. Well, peace be with you, sir: here comes my man.

Mer. But I 'll be hang'd, sir, if he wear your livery:
Marry, go before to field, he 'll be your follower;
Your worship in that sense may call him " man."

Tyb. Romeo, the hate I bear thee can afford
No better term than this, — thou art a villain.

Rom. Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee
Doth much excuse the appertaining rage
To such a greeting: villain am I none;
Therefore farewell; I see thou know'st me not.

Tyb. Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me; therefore turn and draw.

Rom. I do protest, I never injured thee,
But love thee better than thou canst devise,
Till thou shalt know the reason of my love:
And so, good Capulet, — which name I tender
As dearly as mine own, — be satisfied.

Mer. O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
Alla stoccata carries it away. [*Draws.*
Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

Tyb. What wouldst thou have with me?

Mer. Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives; that I mean to make bold withal, and, as you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pilcher by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

Tyb. I am for you. [*Drawing.*

Rom. Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

Mer. Come, sir, your passado. [*They fight.*

Rom. Draw, Benvolio; beat down their weapons. Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage! Tybalt, Mercutio, the prince expressly hath Forbidden bandying in Verona streets: Hold, Tybalt! good Mercutio!

[*Tybalt under Romeo's arm stabs Mercutio, and flies with his followers.*

Mer. I am hurt.
A plague o' both your houses! I am sped.
Is he gone, and hath nothing?

Ben. What, art thou hurt?

Mer. Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 't is enough.
Where is my page? Go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

[*Exit Page.*

Rom. Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

Mer. No, 't is not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but 't is enough, 't will serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A plague o' both your houses! 'Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch

a man to death! a braggart, a rogue, a villain,
that fights by the book of arithmetic! Why the
devil came you between us? I was hurt under
your arm.

Rom. I thought all for the best.

Mer. Help me into some house, Benvolio,
Or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses!
They have made worms' meat of me: I have it,
And soundly too: your houses!

[*Exeunt Mercutio and Benvolio.*

Rom. This gentleman, the prince's near ally,
My very friend, hath got this mortal hurt
In my behalf; my reputation stain'd
With Tybalt's slander, — Tybalt, that an hour
Hath been my kinsman! O sweet Juliet,
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate
And in my temper soften'd valour's steel!

Re-enter Benvolio

Ben. O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio 's dead!
That gallant spirit hath aspired the clouds,
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

Rom. This day's black fate on more days doth
depend;
This but begins the woe others must end.

Ben. Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

Rom. Alive, in triumph! and Mercutio slain!
Away to heaven, respective lenity,
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now!

Re-enter Tybalt

Now, Tybalt, take the villain back again,
That late thou gavest me; for Mercutio's soul

Is but a little way above our heads,
Staying for thine to keep him company:
Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.
Tyb. Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here,
Shalt with him hence.
Rom. This shall determine that.
[*They fight; Tybalt falls.*
Ben. Romeo, away, be gone!
The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain.
Stand not amazed: the prince will doom thee death,
If thou art taken: hence, be gone, away!
Rom. O, I am fortune's fool!
Ben. Why dost thou stay? [*Exit Romeo.*

Enter Citizens, &c.

First Cit. Which way ran he that kill'd Mercutio?
Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?
Ben. There lies that Tybalt.
First Cit. Up, sir, go with me;
I charge thee in the prince's name, obey.

Enter Prince, *attended;* Montague, Capulet, *their* Wives, *and others*

Prin. Where are the vile beginners of this fray?
Ben. O noble prince, I can discover all
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl:
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.
La. Cap. Tybalt, my cousin! O my brother's child!

O prince! O cousin! husband! O, the blood is spilt
Of my dear kinsman! Prince, as thou art true,
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.
O cousin, cousin!

Prin. Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

Ben. Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay;
Romeo, that spoke him fair, bade him bethink
How nice the quarrel was, and urged withal
Your high displeasure: all this, uttered
With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bow'd,
Could not take truce with the unruly spleen
Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast,
Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
Cold death aside, and with the other sends
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity
Retorts it: Romeo he cries aloud,
"Hold, friends! friends, part!" and, swifter than his tongue,
His agile arm beats down their fatal points,
And 'twixt them rushes; underneath whose arm
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled;
But by and by comes back to Romeo,
Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,
And to 't they go like lightning, for, ere I
Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain,
And as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly.
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

La. Cap. He is a kinsman to the Montague;
Affection makes him false; he speaks not true:
Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
And all those twenty could but kill one life.
I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give;
Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

Prin. Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio;
Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

Mon. Not Romeo, prince, he was Mercutio's friend;
His fault concludes but what the law should end,
The life of Tybalt.

Prin. And for that offence
Immediately we do exile him hence:
I have an interest in your hate's proceeding,
My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding;
But I 'll amerce you with so strong a fine
That you shall all repent the loss of mine:
I will be deaf to pleading and excuses;
Nor tears, nor prayers, shall purchase out abuses:
Therefore use none: let Romeo hence in haste,
Else, when he 's found, that hour is his last.
Bear hence this body and attend our will:
Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *Capulet's orchard*

Enter Juliet

Jul. Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
Towards Phœbus' lodging: such a waggoner
As Phaethon would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately.

Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,
That runaways' eyes may wink, and Romeo
Leap to these arms, untalk'd of and unseen.
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,
It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
And learn me how to lose a winning match,
Played for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:
Hood my unmann'd blood, bating in my cheeks,
With thy black mantle; till strange love, grown bold,
Think true love acted simple modesty.
Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.
Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night,
Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night
And pay no worship to the garish sun.
O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
But not possess'd it, and, though I am sold,
Not yet enjoy'd: so tedious is this day
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child that hath new robes
And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,
And she brings news; and every tongue that speaks
But Romeo's name speaks heavenly eloquence.

Enter Nurse, *with cords*

Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there? the cords
That Romeo bid thee fetch?

Nurse. Ay, ay, the cords. [*Throws them down.*

Jul. Ay me! what news? why dost thou wring thy hands?

Nurse. Ah, well-a-day! he 's dead, he 's dead, he 's dead!
We are undone, lady, we are undone! —
Alack the day! he 's gone, he 's kill'd, he 's dead!

Jul. Can Heaven be so envious?

Nurse. Romeo can,
Though Heaven cannot: O, Romeo, Romeo!
Who ever would have thought it? Romeo!

Jul. What devil art thou, that dost torment me thus?
This torture should be roar'd in dismal hell.
Hath Romeo slain himself? say thou but '*I*,'
And that bare vowel "*I*" shall poison more
Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice:
I am not I, if there be such an I;
Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer, "*I*."
If he be slain, say "*I*"; or if not, no:
Brief sounds determine of my weal or woe.

Nurse. I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes, —
God save the mark! — here on his manly breast:
A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse;
Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaub'd in blood,
All in gore blood; I swounded at the sight.

Jul. O, break, my heart! poor bankrupt, break at once!
To prison, eyes; ne'er look on liberty!
Vile earth, to earth resign; end motion here;
And thou and Romeo press one heavy bier!
Nurse. O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had!
O courteous Tybalt! honest gentleman!
That ever I should live to see thee dead!
Jul. What storm is this that blows so contrary?
Is Romeo slaughter'd? and is Tybalt dead?
My dear-loved cousin, and my dearer lord?
Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom!
For who is living, if those two are gone?
Nurse. Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished;
Romeo, that kill'd him, he is banished.
Jul. O God! did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?
Nurse. It did, it did; alas the day, it did!
Jul. O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!
Dove-feather'd raven! wolvish-ravening lamb!
Despiséd substance of divinest show!
Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,
A damnéd saint, an honourable villain!
O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell,
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?
Was ever book containing such vile matter
So fairly bound? O, that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!

Nurse. There 's no trust,
No faith, no honesty in men; all perjured,
All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.
Ah! where 's my man? give me some *aqua vitæ:*
These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.
Shame come to Romeo!
Jul. Blister'd be thy tongue
For such a wish! he was not born to shame:
Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit;
For 't is a throne where honour may be crown'd
Sole monarch of the universal earth.
O, what a beast was I to chide at him!
Nurse. Will you speak well of him that kill'd your cousin?
Jul. Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,
When I, thy three-hours' wife, have mangled it?
But wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;
Your tributary drops belong to woe,
Which you mistaking offer up to joy.
My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
And Tybalt 's dead, that would have slain my husband:
All this is comfort; wherefore weep I then?
Some word there was, worser than Tybalt's death,
That murder'd me: I would forget it fain;
But, O, it presses to my memory,
Like damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds:

"Tybalt is dead, and Romeo — banishéd;"
That 'banishéd,' that one word "banishéd,"
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death
Was woe enough, if it had ended there:
Or, if sour woe delights in fellowship
And needly will be rank'd with other griefs,
Why follow'd not, when she said "Tybalt 's dead,"
Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,
Which modern lamentation might have moved?
But, with a rearward following Tybalt's death,
"Romeo is banishéd," to speak that word,
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
All slain, all dead. "Romeo is banishéd!"
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
In that word 's death; no words can that woe sound.
Where is my father, and my mother, nurse?

Nurse. Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse:
Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.

Jul. Wash they his wounds with tears: mine shall be spent,
When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.
Take up those cords: poor ropes, you are beguiled,
Both you and I; for Romeo is exiled:
He made you for a highway to my bed;
But I, a maid, die maiden-widowéd.
Come, cords, come, nurse; I 'll to my wedding bed;
And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead!

Nurse. Hie to your chamber: I 'll find Romeo
To comfort you: I wot well where he is.
Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night:
I 'll to him; he is hid at Laurence' cell.

Jul. O, find him! give this ring to my true knight,
And bid him come to take his last farewell.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III — *Friar Laurence's cell*

Enter Friar Laurence

Fri. L. Romeo, come forth; come forth, thou fearful man:
Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,
And thou art wedded to calamity.

Enter Romeo

Rom. Father, what news? what is the prince's doom?
What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand,
That I yet know not?

Fri. L. Too familiar
Is my dear son with such sour company:
I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.

Rom. What less than dooms-day is the prince's doom?

Fri. L. A gentler judgment vanish'd from his lips,
Not body's death, but body's banishment.

Rom. Ha, banishment! be merciful, say "death;"
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more, than death: do not say "banishment."

Fri. L. Here from Verona art thou banishéd:
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

Rom. There is no world without Verona walls,
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.

Hence—banishéd is banish'd from the world,
And world's exile is death: then banishéd
Is death mis-term'd: calling death banishment,
Thou cutt'st my head off with a golden axe,
And smilest upon the stroke that murders me.
Fri. L. O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!
Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,
Taking thy part, hath rush'd aside the law,
And turn'd that black word death to banishment:
This is dear mercy, and thou seest it not.
Rom. 'T is torture, and not mercy: heaven is here,
Where Juliet lives; and every cat and dog
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,
Live here in heaven and may look on her;
But Romeo may not: more validity,
More honourable state, more courtship lives
In carrion-flies than Romeo: they may seize
On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand
And steal immortal blessing from her lips,
Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin;
But Romeo may not; he is banishéd:
Flies may do this, but I from this must fly:
They are free men, but I am banishéd:
And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death?
Hadst thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,
No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,
But "banished" to kill me? — "banished"?
O friar, the damned use that word in hell;
Howlings attend it: how hast thou the heart,

Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,
To mangle me with that word "banishéd"?

Fri. L. Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word.

Rom. O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

Fri. L. I 'll give thee armour to keep off that word;
Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,
To comfort thee, though thou art banishéd.

Rom. Yet "banishéd"? Hang up philosophy!
Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,
Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom,
It helps not, it prevails not: talk no more.

Fri. L. O, then I see that madmen have no ears.

Rom. How should they, when that wise men have no eyes?

Fri. L. Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.

Rom. Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel:
Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
An hour but married, Tybalt murderéd,
Doting like me and like me banishéd,
Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear thy hair,
And fall upon the ground, as I do now,
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

[*Knocking within.*

Fri. L. Arise; one knocks; good Romeo, hide thyself.

Rom. Not I; unless the breath of heart-sick groans,

Mist-like, infold me from the search of eyes.
[*Knocking.*
Fri. L. Hark, how they knock! Who 's there?
Romeo, arise;
Thou wilt be taken. Stay awhile! Stand up;
[*Knocking.*
Run to my study. By and by. God's will,
What simpleness is this! I come, I come!
[*Knocking.*
Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what 's
your will?
Nurse. [*Within.*] Let me come in, and you shall
know my errand;
I come from Lady Juliet.
Fri. L. Welcome then.

Enter Nurse

Nurse. O holy friar, O, tell me, holy friar,
Where is my lady's lord? where 's Romeo?
Fri. L. There on the ground, with his own
tears made drunk.
Nurse. O! he is even in my mistress' case,
Just in her case! O woful sympathy!
Piteous predicament! Even so lies she,
Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering.
Stand up, stand up; stand, an you be a man:
For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand;
Why should you fall into so deep an O?
Rom. Nurse!
Nurse. Ah sir! ah sir! Well, death 's the end
of all.

Rom. Spakest thou of Juliet? how is it with her?
Doth she not think me an old murderer,
Now I have stain'd the childhood of our joy
With blood removed but little from her own?
Where is she? and how doth she? and what says
My conceal'd lady to our cancell'd love?
Nurse. O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps;
And now falls on her bed; and then starts up,
And Tybalt calls; and then on Romeo cries,
And then down falls again.
Rom. As if that name,
Shot from the deadly level of a gun,
Did murder her; as that name's cursed hand
Murder'd her kinsman. O, tell me, friar, tell me,
In what vile part of this anatomy
Doth my name lodge? tell me, that I may sack
The hateful mansion. [*Drawing his sword.*
Fri. L. Hold thy desperate hand:
Art thou a man? thy form cries out thou art:
Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote
The unreasonable fury of a beast:
Unseemly woman in a seeming man!
Or ill-beseeming beast in seeming both!
Thou hast amazed me: by my holy order,
I thought thy disposition better temper'd.
Hast thou slain Tybalt? wilt thou slay thyself?
And slay thy lady too that lives in thee,
By doing damned hate upon thyself?
Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth?

Since birth, and heaven, and earth, all three do meet
In thee at once; which thou at once wouldst lose.
Fie, fie, thou shamest thy shape, thy love, thy wit;
Which, like a usurer, abound'st in all,
And usest none in that true use indeed
Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit:
Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,
Digressing from the valour of a man;
Thy dear love sworn but hollow perjury,
Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish;
Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,
Mis-shapen in the conduct of them both,
Like powder in a skilless soldier's flask,
Is set a-fire by thine own ignorance,
And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.
What, rouse thee, man! thy Juliet is alive,
For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead;
There art thou happy: Tybalt would kill thee,
But thou slew'st Tybalt; there art thou happy too:
The law that threaten'd death becomes thy friend
And turns it to exile; there art thou happy:
A pack of blessings lights upon thy back;
Happiness courts thee in her best array;
But, like a misbehaved and sullen wench,
Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love:
Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.
Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed,
Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her:
But look thou stay not till the watch be set,
For then thou canst not pass to Mantua;
Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time
To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,

Beg pardon of the prince, and call thee back
With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.
Go before, nurse: commend me to thy lady;
And bid her hasten all the house to bed,
Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto:
Romeo is coming.

Nurse. O Lord, I could have stay'd here all the night
To hear good counsel: O, what learning is!
My lord, I 'll tell my lady you will come.

Rom. Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.

Nurse. Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir:
Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late. [*Exit.*

Rom. How well my comfort is revived by this!

Fri. L. Go hence; good night; and here stands all your state:
Either be gone before the watch be set,
Or by the break of day disguised from hence:
Sojourn in Mantua; I 'll find out your man,
And he shall signify from time to time
Every good hap to you that chances here:
Give me thy hand; 't is late: farewell; good night.

Rom. But that a joy past joy calls out on me,
It were a grief, so brief to part with thee:
Farewell. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *A room in Capulet's house*

Enter Capulet, Lady Capulet, *and* Paris

Cap. Things have fall'n out, sir, so unluckily,
That we have had no time to move our daughter:

Look you, she loved her kinsman Tybalt dearly,
And so did I: — well, we were born to die.
'T is very late, she 'll not come down to-night:
I promise you, but for your company,
I would have been a-bed an hour ago.

Par. These times of woe afford no time to woo.
Madam, good night: commend me to your daughter.

La. Cap. I will, and know her mind early to-morrow;
To-night she is mew'd up to her heaviness.

Cap. Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender
Of my child's love: I think she will be ruled
In all respects by me; nay, more, I doubt it not.
Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed;
Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love;
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next —
But, soft! what day is this?

Par. Monday, my lord.

Cap. Monday! ha! ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon,
O' Thursday let it be: o' Thursday, tell her,
She shall be married to this noble earl.
Will you be ready? do you like this haste?
We 'll keep no great ado, — a friend or two;
For, hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,
It may be thought we held him carelessly,
Being our kinsman, if we revel much:
Therefore we 'll have some half a dozen friends,
And there an end. But what say you to Thursday?

Par. My lord, I would that Thursday were to-morrow.

Cap. Well, get you gone: o' Thursday be it, then.

Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed,
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding-day.
Farewell, my lord. Light to my chamber, ho!
Afore me! it is so very very late,
That we may call it early by and by.
Good night. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V — *Capulet's orchard*

Enter Romeo *and* Juliet *above, at the window*

Jul. Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate-tree:
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.
Rom. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.
Jul. Yon light is not daylight, I know it, I:
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua:
Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.
Rom. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I 'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,
'T is but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads:

I have more care to stay than will to go:
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.
How is 't, my soul? let 's talk; it is not day.
Jul. It is, it is; hie hence, be gone, away!
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.
Some say the lark makes sweet division;
This doth not so, for she divideth us:
Some say the lark and loathéd toad change eyes;
O, now I would they had changed voices too!
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,
Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up to the day.
O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.
Rom. More light and light: more dark and dark our woes!

Enter Nurse, *to the chamber*

Nurse. Madam!
Jul. Nurse?
Nurse. Your lady mother is coming to your chamber:
The day is broke; be wary, look about. [*Exit.*
Jul. Then, window, let day in, and let life out.
Rom. Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I 'll descend. [*He goeth down.*
Jul. Art thou gone so? love, lord, ay, husband, friend!
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
For in a minute there are many days:
O, by this count I shall be much in years,
Ere I again behold my Romeo!
Rom. Farewell!

I will omit no opportunity
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.
Jul. O, think'st thou, we shall ever meet again?
Rom. I doubt it not; and all these woes shall serve
For sweet discourses in our time to come.
Jul. O God! I have an ill-divining soul!
Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb:
Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.
Rom. And trust me, love, in my eye so do you:
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu! adieu!
[*Exit.*
Jul. O fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle:
If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him
That is renown'd for faith? Be fickle, fortune;
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,
But send him back.
La. Cap. [*Within.*] Ho, daughter, are you up?
Jul. Who is 't that calls? is it my lady mother?
Is she not down so late, or up so early?
What unaccustom'd cause procures her hither?

Enter LADY CAPULET

La. Cap. Why, how now, Juliet?
Jul. Madam, I am not well.
La. Cap. Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?
What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?
And if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him live;

Therefore, have done: some grief shows much of love;
But much of grief shows still some want of wit.
Jul. Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.
La. Cap. So shall you feel the loss but not the friend
Which you weep for.
Jul. Feeling so the loss,
I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.
La. Cap. Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death,
As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.
Jul. What villain, madam?
La. Cap. That same villain, Romeo.
Jul. [*Aside.*] Villain and he be many miles asunder. —
God pardon him! I do, with all my heart;
And yet no man like he doth grieve my heart.
La. Cap. That is, because the traitor murderer lives.
Jul. Ay, madam, from the reach of these my hands:
Would none but I might venge my cousin's death!
La. Cap. We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not:
Then weep no more. I 'll send to one in Mantua,
Where that same banished runagate doth live,
Shall give him such an unaccustom'd dram,
That he shall soon keep Tybalt company:
And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.
Jul. Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
With Romeo, till I behold him — dead —

Is my poor heart so for a kinsman vexed:
Madam, if you could find out but a man
To bear a poison, I would temper it;
That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
Soon sleep in quiet. O, how my heart abhors
To hear him named, and cannot come to him,
To wreak the love I bore my cousin
Upon his body that hath slaughter'd him!
La. Cap. Find thou the means, and I 'll find such a man.
But now I 'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.
Jul. And joy comes well in such a needy time.
What are they, I beseech your ladyship?
La. Cap. Well, well, thou hast a careful father, child;
One who, to put thee from thy heaviness,
Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy,
That thou expect'st not nor I looked not for.
Jul. Madam, in happy time, what day is that?
La. Cap. Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn,
The gallant, young and noble gentleman,
The County Paris, at Saint Peter's Church,
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.
Jul. Now, by Saint Peter's Church and Peter too,
He shall not make me there a joyful bride.
I wonder at this haste; that I must wed
Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.
I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam,
I will not marry yet; and, when I do, I swear,
It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,
Rather than Paris. These are news indeed!

La. Cap. Here comes your father; tell him so yourself,
And see how he will take it at your hands.

Enter Capulet *and* Nurse

Cap. When the sun sets, the air doth drizzle dew;
But for the sunset of my brother's son,
It rains downright.
How now! a conduit, girl? what, still in tears?
Evermore showering? In one little body
Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind;
For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,
Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is,
Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs;
Who, raging with thy tears, and they with them,
Without a sudden calm, will overset
Thy tempest-tossed body. How now, wife!
Have you deliver'd to her our decree?

La. Cap. Ay, sir; but she will none, she gives you thanks.
I would the fool were married to her grave!

Cap. Soft! take me with you, take me with you, wife.
How! will she none? doth she not give us thanks?
Is she not proud? doth she not count her blest,
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

Jul. Not proud, you have; but thankful, that you have:
Proud can I never be of what I hate;
But thankful even for hate, that is meant love.

Cap. How now, how now, chop-logic! What is this?

"Proud," and "I thank you," and "I thank you not;"
And yet "not proud:" mistress minion, you,
Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds,
But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,
To go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church,
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.
Out, you green-sickness carrion! out, you baggage!
You tallow-face!

La. Cap. Fie, fie! what, are you mad?

Jul. Good father, I beseech you on my knees,
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

Cap. Hang thee, young baggage! disobedient wretch!
I tell thee what: get thee to church o' Thursday,
Or never after look me in the face:
Speak not, reply not, do not answer me;
My fingers itch. Wife, we scarce thought us blest
That God had lent us but this only child;
But now I see this one is one too much,
And that we have a curse in having her:
Out on her, hilding!

Nurse. God in heaven bless her!
You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

Cap. And why, my lady wisdom? hold your tongue,
Good prudence; smatter with your gossips, go.

Nurse. I speak no treason.

Cap. O, God ye god-den.

Nurse. May not one speak?

Cap. Peace, you mumbling fool!
Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl;
For here we need it not.
La. Cap. You are too hot.
Cap. God's bread! it makes me mad:
Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play,
Alone, in company, still my care hath been
To have her match'd: and having now provided
A gentleman of noble parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly train'd,
Stuff'd, as they say, with honourable parts,
Proportion'd as one's thought would wish a man;
And then to have a wretched puling fool,
A whining mammet in her fortune's tender,
To answer "I 'll not wed; I cannot love,
I am too young; I pray you, pardon me."
But, an you will not wed, I 'll pardon you:
Graze where you will, you shall not house with me:
Look to 't, think on 't, I do not use to jest.
Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise:
An you be mine, I 'll give you to my friend;
An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets,
For, by my soul, I 'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
Nor what is mine shall never do thee good:
Trust to 't, bethink you: I 'll not be forsworn. [*Exit.*
Jul. Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
That sees into the bottom of my grief?
O, sweet my mother, cast me not away!
Delay this marriage for a month, a week;
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

La. Cap. Talk not to me, for I 'll not speak a word:
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee. [*Exit.*
Jul. O God! — O nurse, how shall this be prevented?
My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven;
How shall that faith return again to earth,
Unless that husband send it me from heaven
By leaving earth? comfort me, counsel me.
Alack, alack, that Heaven should practise stratagems
Upon so soft a subject as myself!
What say'st thou? hast thou not a word of joy?
Some comfort, nurse.
Nurse. Faith, here it is.
Romeo is banish'd; and all the world to nothing,
That he dares ne'er come back to chalienge you;
Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,
I think it best you married with the county.
O, he 's a lovely gentleman!
Romeo 's a dishclout to him: an eagle, madam,
Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye
As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
I think you are happy in this second match,
For it excels your first: or if it did not,
Your first is dead; or 't were as good he were,
As living here and you no use of him.
Jul. Speakest thou from thy heart?
Nurse. And from my soul too;
Or else beshrew them both.
Jul. Amen!

Nurse. What?

Jul. Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous much.
Go in; and tell my lady I am gone,
Having displeased my father, to Laurence' cell
To make confession and to be absolved.

Nurse. Marry, I will; and this is wisely done.
[*Exit.*

Jul. Ancient damnation! O most wicked fiend!
Is it more sin to wish me thus forsworn,
Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
Which she hath praised him with above compare
So many thousand times? Go, counsellor;
Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.
I 'll to the friar, to know his remedy:
If all else fail, myself have power to die. [*Exit.*

ACT IV

Scene I — *Friar Laurence's cell*

Enter Friar Laurence *and* Paris

Fri. L. On Thursday, sir? the time is very short.
Par. My father Capulet will have it so;
And I am nothing slow to slack his haste.
Fri. L. You say you do not know the lady's mind:
Uneven is the course, I like it not.
Par. Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,
And therefore have I little talk'd of love;
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous
That she doth give her sorrow so much sway,
And in his wisdom hastes our marriage,
To stop the inundation of her tears;
Which, too much minded by herself alone,
May be put from her by society:
Now do you know the reason of this haste.
Fri. L. [*Aside.*] I would' I knew not why it should be slow'd.
Look, sir, here comes the lady towards my cell.

Enter Juliet

Par. Happily met, my lady and my wife!
Jul. That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.
Par. That may be, must be, love, on Thursday next.
Jul. What must be shall be.

Fri. L. That 's a certain text.

Par. Come you to make confession to this father?

Jul. To answer that, I should confess to you.

Par. Do not deny to him that you love me.

Jul. I will confess to you that I love him.

Par. So will ye, I am sure, that you love me.

Jul. If I do so, it will be of more price,
Being spoke behind your back, than to your face.

Par. Poor soul, thy face is much abused with tears.

Jul. The tears have got small victory by that;
For it was bad enough before their spite.

Par. Thou wrong'st it, more than tears, with that report.

Jul. That is no slander, sir, which is a truth;
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

Par. Thy face is mine, and thou hast slander'd it.

Jul. It may be so, for it is not mine own.
Are you at leisure, holy father, now;
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?

Fri. L. My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now.
My lord, we must entreat the time alone.

Par. God shield I should disturb devotion!
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse ye:
Till then, adieu; and keep this holy kiss. [*Exit.*

Jul. O, shut the door! and when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me; past hope, past cure, past help!

Fri. L. Ah, Juliet, I already know thy grief;
It strains me past the compass of my wits:
I hear thou must, and nothing may prorogue it,
On Thursday next be married to this county.
Jul. Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st of this,
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it:
If in thy wisdom thou canst give no help,
Do thou but call my resolution wise,
And with this knife I 'll help it presently.
God joined my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands;
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo seal'd,
Shall be the label to another deed,
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt
Turn to another, this shall slay them both:
Therefore, out of thy long-experienced time,
Give me some present counsel, or, behold,
'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife
Shall play the umpire, arbitrating that
Which the commission of thy years and art
Could to no issue of true honour bring.
Be not so long to speak; I long to die,
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.
Fri. L. Hold, daughter: I do spy a kind of hope,
Which craves as desperate an execution
As that is desperate which we would prevent.
If, rather than to marry County Paris,
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,
Then is it likely thou wilt undertake
A thing like death to chide away this shame,
That copest with death himself to scape from it;
And, if thou darest, I 'll give thee remedy.
Jul. O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,

From off the battlements of yonder tower;
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk
Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;
Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house,
O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,
With reeky shanks and yellow chapless skulls;
Or bid me go into a new-made grave
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud;
Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble;
And I will do it without fear or doubt,
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.

Fri. L. Hold, then; go home, be merry, give consent
To marry Paris: Wednesday is to-morrow:
To-morrow night look that thou lie alone;
Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber:
Take thou this vial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off;
When presently through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humour, for no pulse
Shall keep his native progress, but surcease:
No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou livest;
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
To paly ashes, thy eyes' windows fall,
Like death, when he shuts up the day of life;
Each part, deprived of supple government,
Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death:
And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death
Thou shalt continue two and forty hours,
And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.
Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes

To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead:
Then, as the manner of our country is,
In thy best robes uncovered on the bier
Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault
Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.
In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,
Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift,
And hither shall he come: and he and I
Will watch thy waking, and that very night
Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.
And this shall free thee from this present shame;
If no unconstant toy, nor womanish fear,
Abate thy valour in the acting it.

Jul. Give me, give me! O, tell not me of fear!

Fri. L. Hold; get you gone, be strong and prosperous
In this resolve: I 'll send a friar with speed
To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

Jul. Love give me strength! and strength shall help afford.
Farewell, dear father! [*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *Hall in Capulet's house*

Enter Capulet, Lady Capulet, Nurse, *and two* Servingmen

Cap. So many guests invite as here are writ.
[*Exit First Servant.*
Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.

Sec. Serv. You shall have none ill, sir; for I 'll try if they can lick their fingers.

Cap. How canst thou try them so?

Sec. Serv. Marry, sir, 't is an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers: therefore he that cannot lick his fingers goes not with me.

Cap. Go, be gone. [*Exit Sec. Servant.*

We shall be much unfurnish'd for this time.

What, is my daughter gone to Friar Laurence?

Nurse. Ay, forsooth.

Cap. Well, he may chance to do some good on her:

A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.

Nurse. See where she comes from shrift with merry look.

Enter Juliet

Cap. How now, my headstrong! where have you been gadding?

Jul. Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin

Of disobedient opposition

To you and your behests, and am enjoin'd

By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,

To beg your pardon: pardon, I beseech you!

Henceforward I am ever ruled by you.

Cap. Send for the county; go tell him of this:

I 'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

Jul. I met the youthful lord at Laurence' cell;

And gave him what becomed love I might,

Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

Cap. Why, I am glad on 't; this is well: stand up:

This is as 't should be. Let me see the county;

Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.

Now, afore God! this reverend holy friar,
All our whole city is much bound to him.

Jul. Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,
To help me sort such needful ornaments
As you think fit to furnish me to-morrow?

La. Cap. No, not till Thursday; there is time enough.

Cap. Go, nurse, go with her: we 'll to church to-morrow. [*Exeunt Juliet and Nurse.*

La. Cap. We shall be short in our provision:
'T is now near night.

Cap. Tush, I will stir about,
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife:
Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her;
I 'll not to bed to-night; let me alone;
I 'll play the housewife for this once. What, ho!
They are all forth. Well, I will walk myself
To County Paris, to prepare him up
Against to-morrow: my heart is wondrous light,
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III — *Juliet's chamber*

Enter JULIET *and* Nurse

Jul. Ay, those attires are best: but, gentle nurse,
I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night;
For I have need of many orisons
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

Enter Lady Capulet

La. Cap. What, are you busy, ho? need you my help?

Jul. No, madam; we have cull'd such necessaries
As are behoveful for our state to-morrow:
So please you, let me now be left alone,
And let the nurse this night sit up with you;
For, I am sure, you have your hands full all,
In this so sudden business.

La. Cap. Good night:
Get thee to bed, and rest; for thou hast need.

[*Exeunt Lady Capulet and Nurse.*

Jul. Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again.
I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,
That almost freezes up the heat of life:
I 'll call them back again to comfort me:
Nurse! What should she do here?
My dismal scene I needs must act alone.
Come, vial.
What if this mixture do not work at all?
Shall I be married then to-morrow morning?
No, no; this shall forbid it: lie thou there.

[*Laying down her dagger.*

What if it be a poison, which the friar
Subtly hath minister'd to have me dead,
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonour'd,
Because he married me before to Romeo?
I fear it is: and yet, methinks, it should not,
For he hath still been tried a holy man.

How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me? there 's a fearful point!
Shall I not, then, be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?
Or, if I live, is it not very like,
The horrible conceit of death and night,
Together with the terror of the place, —
As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,
Where, for these many hundred years, the bones
Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd:
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,
At some hours in the night spirits resort; —
Alack, alack, is it not like that I,
So early waking, what with loathsome smells,
And shrieks like mandrakes' torn out of the earth,
That living mortals, hearing them, run mad: —
O, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,
Environed with all these hideous fears?
And madly play with my forefathers' joints?
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?
And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?
O, look! methinks I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
Upon a rapier's point: stay, Tybalt, stay!
Romeo, I come! this do I drink to thee.

[*She falls upon her bed, within the curtains.*

Scene IV — *Hall in Capulet's house*

Enter Lady Capulet *and* Nurse

La. Cap. Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices, nurse.

Nurse. They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.

Enter Capulet

Cap. Come, stir, stir, stir! the second cock hath crow'd,
The curfew bell hath rung, 't is three o'clock:
Look to the baked meats, good Angelica:
Spare not for cost.

Nurse. Go, you cot-quean, go,
Get you to bed; faith, you 'll be sick to-morrow
For this night's watching.

Cap. No, not a whit: what! I have watch'd ere now
All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

La. Cap. Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt in your time;
But I will watch you from such watching now.

[*Exeunt Lady Capulet and Nurse.*

Cap. A jealous-hood, a jealous-hood!

Enter three or four Servingmen, *with spits, logs, and baskets*

Now, fellow,
What 's there?

First Serv. Things for the cook, sir; but I know not what.

Cap. Make haste, make haste. [*Exit First Serv.*]
Sirrah, fetch drier logs:
Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.
Sec. Serv. I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,
And never trouble Peter for the matter. [*Exit.*
Cap. Mass, and well said; a merry whoreson, ha!
Thou shalt be logger-head. Good faith, 't is day:
The county will be here with music straight,
For so he said he would: I hear him near.
[*Music within.*
Nurse! Wife! What, ho! What, nurse, I say!

Re-enter Nurse

Go, waken Juliet, go, and trim her up;
I 'll go and chat with Paris: hie, make haste,
Make haste; the bridegroom he is come already:
Make haste, I say. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V — *Juliet's chamber*

Enter Nurse

Nurse. Mistress! what, mistress! Juliet! fast, I warrant her, she:
Why, lamb! why, lady! fie, you slug-a-bed!
Why, love, I say! madam! sweet-heart! why, bride!
What, not a word? you take your pennyworths now;
Sleep for a week; for the next night, I warrant,
The County Paris hath set up his rest
That you shall rest but little. God forgive me,

Marry, and amen, how sound is she asleep!
I needs must wake her. Madam, madam, madam!
Ay, let the county take you in your bed;
He 'll fright you up, i' faith. Will it not be?
[*Undraws the curtains.*
What, dress'd! and in your clothes! and down again!
I must needs wake you: Lady! lady! lady!
Alas, alas! Help, help! my lady 's dead!
O, well-a-day, that ever I was born!
Some aqua vitæ, ho! My lord! my lady!

Enter Lady Capulet

La. Cap. What noise is here?
Nurse. O lamentable day!
La. Cap. What is the matter?
Nurse. Look, look! O heavy day!
La. Cap. O me! O me! my child, my only life,
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee!
Help, help! Call help.

Enter Capulet

Cap. For shame, bring Juliet forth; her lord is come.
Nurse. She 's dead, deceased, she 's dead; alack the day!
La. Cap. Alack the day, she 's dead, she 's dead, she 's dead!
Cap. Ha! let me see her: out, alas! she 's cold;
Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff;
Life and these lips have long been separated:

Death lies on her like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.
Nurse. O lamentable day!
La. Cap. O woful time!
Cap. Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,
Ties up my tongue, and will not let me speak.

Enter Friar Laurence *and* Paris, *with* Musicians

Fri. L. Come, is the bride ready to go to church?
Cap. Ready to go, but never to return.
O son! the night before thy wedding-day
Hath Death lain with thy wife. There she lies,
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.
Death is my son-in-law, Death is my heir;
My daughter he hath wedded: I will die,
And leave him all; life, living, all is Death's.
Par. Have I thought long to see this morning's face,
And doth it give me such a sight as this?
La. Cap. Accursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!
Most miserable hour that e'er time saw
In lasting labour of his pilgrimage!
But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,
But one thing to rejoice and solace in,
And cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight!
Nurse. O woe! O woful, woful, woful day!
Most lamentable day, most woful day,
That ever, ever, I did yet behold!
O day! O day! O day! O hateful day!
Never was seen so black a day as this:

O woful day, O woful day!
Par. Beguiled, divorced, wronged, spited, slain!
Most detestable death, by thee beguiled,
By cruel cruel thee quite overthrown!
O love! O life! not life, but love in death!
Cap. Despised, distressed, hated, martyr'd, kill'd!
Uncomfortable time, why camest thou now
To murder, murder our solemnity?
O child! O child! my soul, and not my child!
Dead art thou! Alack! my child is dead;
And with my child my joys are buried.
Fri. L. Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's cure lives not
In these confusions. Heaven and yourself
Had part in this fair maid; now heaven hath all,
And all the better is it for the maid:
Your part in her you could not keep from death,
But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.
The most you sought was her promotion;
For 't was your heaven she should be advanced:
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
O, in this love, you love your child so ill,
That you run mad, seeing that she is well:
She 's not well married that lives married long;
But she 's best married that dies married young.
Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
On this fair corse; and, as the custom is,
In all her best array bear her to church:
For though fond nature bids us all lament,
Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

Cap. All things that we ordained festival,
Turn from their office to black funeral;
Our instruments to melancholy bells,
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast,
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,
And all things change them to the contrary.
Fri. L. Sir, go you in; and, madam, go with him;
And go, Sir Paris; every one prepare
To follow this fair corse unto her grave:
The heavens do lour upon you for some ill;
Move them no more by crossing their high will.
[*Exeunt Capulet, Lady Capulet, Paris, and Friar.*
First Mus. Faith, we may put up our pipes, and be gone.
Nurse. Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up;
For, well you know, this is a pitiful case. [*Exit.*
First Mus. Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

Enter Peter

Pet. Musicians, O, musicians! "Heart's ease, Heart's ease:" O, an you will have me live, play "Heart's ease."
First Mus. Why "Heart's ease"?
Pet. O, musicians, because my heart itself plays "My heart is full of woe:" O, play me some merry dump, to comfort me.
First Mus. Not a dump we: 't is no time to play now.

Pet. You will not, then?

First Mus. No.

Pet. I will then give it you soundly.

First Mus. What will you give us?

Pet. No money, on my faith, but the gleek; I will give you the minstrel.

First Mus. Then will I give you the serving-creature.

Pet. Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on your pate. I will carry no crotchets: I 'll *re* you, I 'll *fa* you; do you note me?

First Mus. An you *re* us and *fa* us, you note us.

Sec. Mus. Pray you, put up your dagger, and put out your wit.

Pet. Then have at you with my wit! I will dry-beat you with an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger. Answer me like men:

> "*When griping grief the heart doth wound,*
> *And doleful dumps the mind oppress,*
> *Then music with her silver sound*"—

Why, "silver sound"? why "music with her silver sound"? What say you, Simon Catling?

First Mus. Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

Pet. Pretty! What say you, Hugh Rebeck?

Sec. Mus. I say "silver sound," because musicians sound for silver.

Pet. Pretty too! What say you, James Sound-post?

Third Mus. 'Faith, I know not what to say.

Pet. O, I cry you mercy; you are the singer: I

will say for you. It is "music with her silver sound," because musicians have no gold for sound

"Then music with her silver sound
With speedy help doth lend redress."

[*Exit.*

First Mus. What a pestilent knave is this same!

Sec. Mus. Hang him, Jack! Come, we 'll in here; tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

Scene I — *Mantua. A Street*

Enter Romeo

Rom. If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:
My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne;
And all this day an unaccustom'd spirit
Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.
I dreamt my lady came and found me dead —
Strange dream, that gives a dead man leave to think! —
And breathed such life with kisses in my lips,
That I revived, and was an emperor.
Ah me! how sweet is love itself possess'd,
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

Enter Balthasar, *booted*

News from Verona! — How now, Balthasar!
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
How doth my lady? Is my father well?
How fares my Juliet? that I ask again;
For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

Bal. Then she is well, and nothing can be ill:
Her body sleeps in Capel's monument,
And her immortal part with angels lives.
I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,

And presently took post to tell it you:
O, pardon me for bringing these ill news,
Since you did leave it for my office, sir.
Rom. Is it even so? then, I defy you, stars!
Thou know'st my lodging: get me ink and paper,
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.
Bal. I do beseech you, sir, have patience:
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure.
Rom. Tush, thou art deceived:
Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do.
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?
Bal. No, my good lord.
Rom. No matter: get thee gone,
And hire those horses; I 'll be with thee straight.
[*Exit Balthasar*
Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.
Let 's see for means: O mischief, thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
I do remember an apothecary, —
And hereabouts he dwells, — which late I noted
In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples; meagre were his looks,
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones:
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuff'd, and other skins
Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,
Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,
Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a show.
Noting this penury, to myself I said

" An if a man did need a poison now,
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,
Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him."
O, this same thought did but forerun my need;
And this same needy man must sell it me.
As I remember, this should be the house.
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.
What, ho! apothecary!

Enter Apothecary

Ap. Who calls so loud?

Rom. Come hither, man. I see, that thou art poor:
Hold, there is forty ducats: let me have
A dram of poison, such soon-speeding gear
As will disperse itself through all the veins
That the life-weary taker may fall dead
And that the trunk may be discharged of breath
As violently as hasty powder fired
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

Ap. Such mortal drugs I have; but Mantua's law
Is death to any he that utters them.

Rom. Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,
And fear'st to die? famine is in thy cheeks,
Need and oppression starveth in thy eyes,
Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back;
The world is not thy friend nor the world's law;
The world affords no law to make thee rich;
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

Ap. My poverty, but not my will, consents.

Rom. I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

Ap. Put this in any liquid thing you will,

And drink it off; and, if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would despatch you straight.

Rom. There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,
Doing more murder in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell.
I sell thee poison; thou hast sold me none.
Farewell: buy food, and get thyself in flesh.
Come, cordial and not poison, go with me
To Juliet's grave; for there must I use thee.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *Friar Laurence's cell*

Enter Friar John

Fri. J. Holy Franciscan friar! brother, ho!

Enter Friar Laurence

Fri. L. This same should be the voice of Friar John.
Welcome from Mantua: what says Romeo?
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

Fri. J. Going to find a bare-foot brother out,
One of our order, to associate me,
Here in this city visiting the sick,
And finding him, the searchers of the town,
Suspecting that we both were in a house
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,
Seal'd up the doors and would not let us forth;
So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.

Fri. L. Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

Fri. J. I could not send it, — here it is again, —
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
So fearful were they of infection.

Fri. L. Unhappy fortune! by my brotherhood,
The letter was not nice but full of charge
Of dear import, and the neglecting it
May do much danger. Friar John, go hence;
Get me an iron crow, and bring it straight
Unto my cell.

Fri. J. Brother, I 'll go and bring it thee. [*Exit.*

Fri. L. Now must I to the monument alone;
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake:
She will beshrew me much that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents;
But I will write again to Mantua,
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come;
Poor living corse, closed in a dead man's tomb!
[*Exit.*

Scene III — *A Churchyard; in it a tomb belonging to the Capulets*

Enter Paris, *and his* Page, *bearing flowers and a torch*

Par. Give me thy torch, boy: hence, and stand aloof:
Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.
Under yond yew-trees lay thee all along,
Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground;
So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread,
Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves,

But thou shalt hear it: whistle then to me,
As signal that thou hear'st something approach.
Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

Page. [*Aside.*] I am almost afraid to stand alone
Here in the churchyard; yet I will adventure.

[*Retires.*

Par. Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew, —

O woe! thy canopy is dust and stones; —
Which with sweet water nightly I will dew,
Or, wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans:
The obsequies that I for thee will keep
Nightly shall be to strew thy grave and weep.

[*The Page whistles.*

The boy gives warning something doth approach.
What cursed foot wanders this way to-night,
To cross my obsequies and true love's rite?
What, with a torch! muffle me, night, awhile.

[*Retires.*

Enter Romeo *and* Balthasar, *with a torch, mattock, &c.*

Rom. Give me that mattock and the wrenching iron.

Hold, take this letter: early in the morning
See thou deliver it to my lord and father.
Give me the light: upon thy life, I charge thee,
Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,
And do not interrupt me in my course.
Why I descend into this bed of death,
Is partly to behold my lady's face;
But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger

A precious ring, a ring that I must use
In dear employment: therefore hence, be gone:
But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry
In what I further shall intend to do,
By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint
And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs:
The time and my intents are savage-wild,
More fierce and more inexorable far
Than empty tigers or the roaring sea.

Bal. I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

Rom. So shalt thou show me friendship. Take thou that:
Live, and be prosperous: and farewell, good fellow.

Bal. [*Aside.*] For all this same, I 'll hide me hereabout:
His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt. [*Retires.*

Rom. Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
And, in despite, I 'll cram thee with more food!

[*Opens the tomb.*

Par. This is that banish'd haughty Montague,
That murder'd my love's cousin, with which grief,
It is supposed, the fair creature died;
And here is come to do some villainous shame
To the dead bodies: I will apprehend him.

[*Comes forward.*

Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague!
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:
Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.

Rom. I must indeed; and therefore came I hither.
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man;
Fly hence, and leave me: think upon these gone;
Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,
Put not another sin upon my head,
By urging me to fury: O, be gone!
By heaven, I love thee better than myself;
For I come hither arm'd against myself:
Stay not, be gone; live, and hereafter say,
A madman's mercy bade thee run away.
Par. I do defy thy conjurations,
And apprehend thee for a felon here.
Rom. Wilt thou provoke me? then have at thee, boy! [*They fight.*
Page. O Lord, they fight! I will go call the watch. [*Exit.*
Par. O, I am slain. [*Falls.*] If thou be merciful,
Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet. [*Dies.*
Rom. In faith, I will. Let me peruse this face.
Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris!
What said my man, when my betossed soul
Did not attend him as we rode? I think
He told me Paris should have married Juliet:
Said he not so? or did I dream it so?
Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
To think it was so? O, give me thy hand,
One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!
I 'll bury thee in a triumphant grave;
A grave? O, no! a lantern, slaughter'd youth,
For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
This vault a feasting presence full of light.

Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.
[*Laying Paris in the tomb.*
How oft, when men are at the point of death,
Have they been merry! which their keepers call
A lightning before death: O, how may I
Call this a lightning? O my love! my wife!
Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:
Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
And death's pale flag is not advanced there.
Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
O, what more favour can I do to thee,
Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain
To sunder his that was thine enemy?
Forgive me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet,
Why art thou yet so fair? shall I believe
That unsubstantial death is amorous,
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
For fear of that, I still will stay with thee:
And never from this palace of dim night
Depart again: here, here will I remain
With worms that are thy chambermaids; O, here
Will I set up my everlasting rest,
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look your last!
Arms, take your last embrace! and, lips, O you
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
A dateless bargain to engrossing death!
Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide!

Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark!
Here 's to my love! [*Drinks.*] O true apothecary!
Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.
[*Dies.*

Enter, at the other end of the churchyard, FRIAR LAURENCE, *with a lantern, crow, and spade*

Fri. L. Saint Francis be my speed! how oft to-night
Have my old feet stumbled at graves! Who 's there?
Bal. Here 's one, a friend, and one that knows you well.
Fri. L. Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,
What torch is yond, that vainly lends his light
To grubs and eyeless skulls? as I discern,
It burneth in the Capels' monument.
Bal. It doth so, holy sir; and there 's my master,
One that you love.
Fri. L. Who is it?
Bal. Romeo.
Fri. L. How long hath he been there?
Bal. Full half an hour.
Fri. L. Go with me to the vault.
Bal. I dare not, sir:
My master knows not but I am gone hence;
And fearfully did menace me with death,
If I did stay to look on his intents.

Fri. L. Stay then; I 'll go alone. Fear comes upon me;
O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.
Bal. As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,
I dreamt my master and another fought,
And that my master slew him.
Fri. L. Romeo! [*Advances.*
Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?
[*Enters the tomb.*
Romeo! O, pale! Who else? what, Paris too?
And steep'd in blood? Ah! what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!
The lady stirs. [*Juliet wakes.*
Jul. O comfortable friar! where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am. Where is my Romeo?
[*Noise within.*
Fri. L. I hear some noise. Lady, come from that nest
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep:
A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents. Come, come away.
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;
And Paris too. Come, I 'll dispose of thee
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns:
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming;
Come, go, good Juliet [*Noise again*], I dare no longer stay.

Jul. Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.
[*Exit Fri. L.*
What 's here? a cup, closed in my true love's hand?
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end:
O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop
To help me after? I will kiss thy lips;
Haply, some poison yet doth hang on them,
To make me die with a restorative. [*Kisses him.*
Thy lips are warm.

First Watch. [*Within.*] Lead, boy: which way?

Jul. Yea, noise? then I 'll be brief. O happy dagger! [*Snatching Romeo's dagger.*
This is thy sheath [*Stabs herself*]; there rust, and let me die.
[*Falls on Romeo's body and dies.*

Enter Watch, *with the* Page *of* PARIS

Page. This is the place; there, where the torch doth burn.

First Watch. The ground is bloody; search about the churchyard:
Go, some of you, whoe'er you find, attach.
Pitiful sight! here lies the county slain:
And Juliet bleeding, warm, and newly dead,
Who here hath lain this two days buried.
Go, tell the prince: run to the Capulets:
Raise up the Montagues: some others search:
We see the ground whereon these woes do lie;
But the true ground of all these piteous woes
We cannot without circumstance descry.

Re-enter some of the Watch, *with* Balthasar

Sec. Watch. Here 's Romeo's man; we found him in the churchyard.

First Watch. Hold him in safety, till the prince come hither.

Re-enter others of the Watch, *with* Friar Laurence

Third Watch. Here is a friar, that trembles, sighs, and weeps:
We took this mattock and this spade from him,
As he was coming from this churchyard side.

First Watch. A great suspicion: stay the friar too.

Enter the Prince *and* Attendants

Prin. What misadventure is so early up,
That calls our person from our morning's rest?

Enter Capulet, Lady Capulet, *and others*

Cap. What should it be, that they so shriek abroad?

La. Cap. The people in the street cry Romeo,
Some Juliet, and some Paris; and all run,
With open outcry, toward our monument.

Prin. What fear is this which startles in our ears?

First Watch. Sovereign, here lies the County Paris slain;
And Romeo dead; and Juliet, dead before,
Warm and new kill'd.

Prin. Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

First Watch. Here is a friar, and slaughter'd
Romeo's man;
With instruments upon them, fit to open
These dead men's tombs.
Cap. O heavens! O wife, look how our daughter
bleeds!
This dagger hath mista'en, — for, lo, his house
Is empty on the back of Montague, —
And it mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom!
La. Cap. O me! this sight of death is as a bell,
That warns my old age to a sepulchre.

Enter Montague *and others*

Prin. Come, Montague; for thou art early up,
To see thy son and heir more early down.
Mon. Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night;
Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath:
What further woe conspires against mine age?
Prin. Look, and thou shalt see.
Mon. O thou untaught! what manners is in
this,
To press before thy father to a grave?
Prin. Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,
Till we can clear these ambiguities,
And know their spring, their head, their true de-
scent;
And then will I be general of your woes
And lead you even to death: meantime forbear,
And let mischance be slave to patience.
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.
Fri. L. I am the greatest, able to do least,
Yet most suspected, as the time and place

Doth make against me, of this direful murder;
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge
Myself condemned and myself excused.

Prin. Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

Fri. L. I will be brief, for my short date of breath
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.
Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet;
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife:
I married them; and their stol'n marriage-day
Was Tybalt's dooms-day, whose untimely death
Banish'd the new-made bridegroom from this city,
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pined.
You, to remove that siege of grief from her,
Betroth'd and would have married her perforce
To County Paris: then comes she to me,
And, with wild looks, bid me devise some means
To rid her from this second marriage,
Or in my cell there would she kill herself.
Then gave I her, so tutor'd by my art,
A sleeping potion; which so took effect
As I intended, for it wrought on her
The form of death: meantime, I writ to Romeo,
That he should hither come as this dire night,
To help to take her from her borrow'd grave,
Being the time the potion's force should cease.
But he which bore my letter, Friar John,
Was stay'd by accident, and yesternight
Return'd my letter back. Then all alone
At the prefixed hour of her waking,
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault;

Meaning to keep her closely at my cell,
Till I conveniently could send to Romeo:
But when I came, some minute ere the time
Of her awaking, here untimely lay
The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.
She wakes; and I entreated her come forth,
And bear this work of heaven with patience:
But then a noise did scare me from the tomb;
And she, too desperate, would not go with me,
But, as it seems, did violence on herself.
All this I know; and to the marriage
Her nurse is privy: and, if aught in this
Miscarried by my fault, let my old life
Be sacrificed, some hour before his time,
Unto the rigour of severest law.

Prin. We still have known thee for a holy man.

Where 's Romeo's man? what can he say in this?

Bal. I brought my master news of Juliet's death;
And then in post he came from Mantua
To this same place, to this same monument.
This letter he early bid me give his father,
And threaten'd me with death, going in the vault,
If I departed not and left him there.

Prin. Give me the letter; I will look on it.
Where is the county's page, that raised the watch?
Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

Page. He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave;
And bid me stand aloof, and so I did:
Anon comes one with light to ope the tomb;

And, by and by, my master drew on him;
And then I ran away to call the watch.
Prin. This letter doth make good the friar's words,
Their course of love, the tidings of her death:
And here he writes that he did buy a poison
Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal
Came to this vault to die, and lie with Juliet.
Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love.
And I for winking at your discords too,
Have lost a brace of kinsmen: all are punish'd.
Cap. O brother Montague, give me thy hand:
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
Can I demand.
Mon. But I can give thee more:
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;
That while Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at such rate be set
As that of true and faithful Juliet.
Cap. As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie;
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!
Prin. A glooming peace this morning with it brings;
The sun for sorrow, will not show his head;
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things;
Some shall be pardon'd and some punished:
For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo. [*Exeunt.*

NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbott	Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, 3d edition.
Brooke	Arthur Brooke's poem, *Romeus and Juliet*, ed. Munro, J. J.
F 1 or F	First Folio (1623) of Shakespeare's plays.
F 2	Second Folio (1632).
Ff	Folios.
N. E. Dict. . . .	*A New English Dictionary*, ed. Murray.
Q 1	First Quarto (1597) of *Romeo and Juliet*.
Q 2	Second Quarto (1599).
Q 3	Third Quarto (1607).
Q 4	Fourth Quarto.
Q 5	Fifth Quarto (1637).
Qq	Quartos.
Schmidt	Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon*.

PROLOGUE

The object of a prologue is to give the audience in a few words, the subject and character of the play about to be presented. Since this prologue has no marked stylistic excellence, doubt is sometimes expressed as to its authorship. The form is identical with that of Shakespeare's sonnets, as is the epilogue to *Henry V*. See Appendix A, iii, for the form of the Prologue printed in Q 1.

4. ***civil***, *i.e.* belonging to the state.

6. ***star-cross'd***. The domination of evil stars governed the fate of the lovers. Belief that stars control our destiny is not unknown at the present day, but among the Elizabethans it had more general acceptance. In this play Romeo, especially, refers to it again and again. Shakespeare's interest in astrology is attested in *Sonnets* xiv and xv.

8. ***do***. Rowe's correction from the older *doth*, which is retained

by some editors and is defensible on grounds of usage. But the succession of sounds, "Do*th* wi*th th*eir dea*th*," makes the line undeniably harsh.

12. *two hours'*. Of interest as indicating the length of performance of an Elizabethan play. Allusions in contemporary dramas point to the same conclusion. Cf. *Henry VIII*, Prologue:

> "may see away their shilling
> Richly in two short hours."

ACT I — SCENE 1

This scene is an admirable example of dramatic skill in opening the play. A fight beginning among some ignorant servants and gradually involving most of the important personages in the Capulet and Montague families, not only introduces these characters, but at the same time explains the situation between the houses, emphasizes the senseless feud, and strikes the keynote of the tragedy. In contrast to the mad fury of most of his friends and foes is Romeo's affected melancholy, the result of unrequited love for a Capulet maiden. His presence in such an atmosphere is sure to bring misfortune. The fiery speeches of Tybalt and the explicit warning by Prince Escalus foreshadow the tragic developments of act iii. scene 1.

1. *carry coals*, put up with insults, bear affronts. The lowest menial servants were supposed to carry the coal, and hence to submit to any indignity. In the same connection may be explained the term *collier*, in the next line.

4. *choler*. As the pun would indicate, the pronunciation was then as now almost the same as that of "collar." Jonson has the same pun, *Every Man in His Humour*, iii. 5. 8–9.

15. *take the wall*, figurative for "getting the better of." In the narrow, undrained streets of this period the side of the road nearest the wall was safer and hence was much sought after when travellers met. But it was deemed one of the privileges of rank to "take the wall" side from those of meaner birth.

17. *the weakest goes to the wall*, a popular proverb of the time, and the title of an anonymous play, published in 1600.

20. *weaker vessels*, a Biblical allusion. See 1 *Peter*, iii. 7.

37. *poor John*, hake dried and salted, apparently the staple food of servants during Lent. Of course Gregory is hitting at the leanness of his comrade.

38. *two of . . . the Montagues.* They recognize their foes at a distance by the tokens worn in their caps. Cf. Gascoigne, *Device of a Masque* (1575):

"And for a further proofe he shewed in hys hat
Thys token which the *Mountacutes* did beare alwaies, for that
They covet to be knowne from *Capels*, where they pass,
For ancient grutch whych long ago 'tweene these two houses was."

44. *take the law of our sides.* Q 1 reads *on our sides*, which gives the correct meaning.

48. *bite my thumb*, "to threaten or defie, by putting the thumbe naile into the mouth, and with a jerke (from the upper teeth) make to knacke" (Cotgrave).

65. *one of my master's kinsmen, i. e.* Tybalt. Benvolio coming from the other side, is unnoticed.

70. *swashing*, the reading of Qq. 4, 5, generally accepted in place of the *washing* of Q 2, F. *Swashing* means smashing, crushing, as in *As You Like It*, i. 3. 122, "a swashing and a martial outside." But Dowden thinks *washing* "is possible," and follows Daniel in citing Richard Harvey, *Plaine Percevall* (1589): "A washing blow of this [a quarter-staff] is as good as a Laundresse." To this citation may be added Fletcher, *The Wild-Goose Chase* (c. 1621), v. 4. 38, "give her but a washing blow," which Wilson emends to *swashing*.

71. *Part, fools!* Benvolio furnishes a strong foil to Tybalt, and later to Mercutio.

73. *What, art thou drawn?* Is your sword drawn? See l. 77, below.

heartless hinds. Note the word-play between *hearts* and *hart*. *Heartless* here signifies cowardly. *Hinds* may mean female deer, as well as menials.

79. *Have at thee*, I shall strike thee, a conventional threat.

80. *Clubs, bills, and partisans*, a call for men armed with these weapons to put down the disturbance. "Clubs!" was a familiar street-cry of Shakespeare's London, originally applied to the apprentices, but later to the policemen.

81. *in his gown, i. e.* nightgown. Old Capulet's rest has been disturbed by the fray.

82. *my long sword*, for defence; his short sword served only for ornament.

83. *a crutch.* Lady Capulet, who is younger than her husband, insinuates that he is too infirm to engage in conflict.

85. ***in spite of me.*** Not the modern sense of the phrase, but "in despite or defiance of me." Cf. Milton, *L'Allegro:*

> "Then to come *in spite of* sorrow,
> And at my window bid good morrow."

96. ***airy word,*** light word. Cf. *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 267: "I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow."

102. ***canker'd.*** See Glossary.

109. ***Free-town,*** *Villa Franca* in the Italian story. Shakespeare found the English word in Brooke, used of the castle in which Paris and Juliet were to wed. See Appendix B, 1.

119. ***Who, nothing hurt withal.*** *Who* in Elizabethan English is frequently used of inanimate objects regarded as persons. See Abbott, § 264, and cf. i. 4. 100, and iii. 3. 38, below. For the adverbial use of *nothing*, cf. Abbott, § 55. *Withal* = with it, as frequently in Shakespeare.

128. "The sycamore or wild-fig tree Shakespeare has referred to in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 2, and in *Othello*, iv. 3, as a tree whose shade is dedicated to dejected lovers" (Delius).

131. ***ware.*** See Glossary.

134. This line was adapted from Q 1 by Pope. Many editors prefer the reading of the other Quartos and the Folio:

> "Which then most sought where most might not be found,
> Being one too many by my weary self."

Hudson, adopting this latter reading, construes "His disposition was to be in solitude, as he could hardly endure even so much company as himself." The thought of the present reading is fundamentally "never less alone than when alone," an apothegm attributed by Cicero to Scipio Africanus, and repeated many times by both Latin and English writers. An extended series of notes on the phrase was called forth by Professor A. S. Cook in *Modern Language Notes*, xxiv, xxv, and xxvi.

143. Observe the double pun here concerning the ***heavy son*** (sun) who steals ***away from light.***

157. ***bit with.*** For the use of this preposition where we should use "by," cf. Abbott, § 193.

159. ***the sun.*** Theobald's emendation for *the same* of Qq Ff.

161. ***Enter Romeo.*** Some critics place his entrance four lines below, where Benvolio first addresses him. Romeo probably enters

at the back of the stage and is coming forward to meet his friends while they are speaking these lines.

165. *to hear true shrift,* as to hear an honest confession. For omission of *as*, see Abbott, § 281.

166. *good morrow,* good morning. Romeo is surprised to learn that it is not yet noon.

167. *ay me!* the lover's sigh. Note Juliet's use of it, ii. 2. 25, and Mercutio's raillery, ii. 1. 10, below.

175. *view, i. e.* appearance. In l. 177, below, it means sight, power of seeing.

177. *still.* See Glossary.

178. Love is represented as blindfolded, and yet he finds his way to the hearts of all. The meaning is not, as some have thought, that Love perceives the road that he is forbidden to take. These lines fairly represent the conventional love-language of the Elizabethans.

181. The family hatred interferes with Romeo's love. Rosaline is a Capulet, as i. 2. 72, below, indicates.

183. *create.* Some editors prefer *created*, the reading of Q 2. The meaning would be the same in both cases, but *create* seems preferable on account of the rhyme so produced. Couplets are often introduced into the midst of blank verse, as in ll. 190–197, 199–204, 208–209, etc., below.

193. *propagate*, "to extend; to increase" (Webster), a sense now obsolete.

to have it prest, by having it pressed; the infinitive is used gerundially. See Abbott, § 356. Dowden suggests that the reference is to Benvolio's word, *oppression*, l. 190, above.

195. *too much of mine own.* Professor Chambers cites *Hamlet*, iv. 7. 117:

> "For goodness growing to a plurisy,
> Dies in his own too much."

196. *raised.* So reads Q 1; others have *made*, which some editors prefer.

197. *purged*, purified from smoke.

200. *choking gall . . . preserving sweet.* "The line means that love kills and keeps alive, is a bane and an antidote" (Dowden).

205. *sadness*, soberness, seriousness. So *sadly*, l. 207, means seriously.

214–226. It has been suggested that Shakespeare may have intended these lines as a compliment to Queen Elizabeth.

215. ***Dian's wit,*** "a mind like Diana's, with reference both to her will and to her intelligence" (Strunk).

216. ***strong proof,*** "a state of having been tried and having stood the test" (Herford).

217. ***unharm'd,*** the reading of Q 1, which has been generally adopted. F 1 and all the quartos except Q 1 read *uncharm'd*, but this word seems inconsistent with the figure of the bow and arrow. Collier has *encharmed.*

218. ***siege.*** The figure of a besieged castle, applied to a lady sued by her lover, was one of the most common in Shakespeare's day. So *Cymbeline*, iii. 4. 136:

> "That Cloten, whose love-suit hath been to me
> As fearful as a siege."

Venus and Adonis, 423: "Remove your siege from my unyielding heart." It is the same figure that Regan uses in *King Lear*, v. 3. 76, when in token of complete surrender to Edmund she exclaims:

> "Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine."

222, 224–225. By resolving to remain a maiden she will leave no one to inherit her beauty. Dowden quotes *Sonnets*, xi. 9–10:

> "Let those whom Nature hath not made for store
> Harsh, featureless, and rude, barrenly perish."

The same thought is repeated many times in *Sonnets*, i.–xvii. It is also found in contemporary writings. So about 1590 Robert Greene in his play, *Friar Bacon* (*Works*, ed. Collins, v. 1. 1908) makes Lacy exclaim to his beloved Margaret, who is about to become a nun:

> "Twere injurie to me,
> To smother up such bewtie in a cell."

227. ***wisely too fair.*** "There is in her too much sanctimonious wisdom united with beauty which induces her to continue chaste with the hope of attaining heavenly bliss" (Malone).

235. "To force that exquisite beauty of hers yet more upon my judgment, and so make me more keenly alive to it" (Herford).

236. ***these happy masks,*** probably not referring specifically to masks worn by spectators at the play, but to women's masks in general, *happy* in being permitted to touch their *fair brows.* Of course, there is a further suggestion that Rosaline's beauty surpasses that of other ladies as far as a fair lady's countenance sur-

passes the mask. The figures elaborated in lines 238–42 give other turns to the same thought.

238. *strucken.* For form see Abbott, § 344, and compare *King Lear*, i. 4. 93: "I'll not be strucken, my lord."

240. *passing,* surpassingly, exceedingly, as in *Othello*, i. 3. 160: "'T was strange, 't was passing strange."

244. *doctrine,* teaching, instruction, the literal sense of the word. Hence, *pay that doctrine* = give that instruction, whatever may be the cost.

SCENE 2

Here we are concerned with two distinct lines of action. First, Paris is shown (as in no earlier version of the story) to be a claimant for Juliet's hand even before the latter meets Romeo. Then, at the suggestion of Benvolio, Romeo decides on the dangerous step of attending uninvited a feast at the Capulet home.

1. *But Montague is bound.* Shakespeare learned early the playwright's trick of adding vitality to his scenes by opening them in the midst of a conversation.

4. *reckoning,* estimation, distinction. *N. E. Dict.* quotes Cogan's translation of *Pinto's Travels*, xlvii. 271: "He found that some fifty thousand were missing, all men of little reckoning."

9. *fourteen years.* Painter makes Juliet eighteen, and Brooke makes her sixteen. Exactly why Shakespeare reduces her age still more is not easy to see. One theory is that in the edition of Brooke which he used, "xvi" may have been misprinted "xiv." Professor Barrett Wendell suggests that he wished to use the pun in i. 3. 13, below, and that the word "six" there would give too harsh a sibilant line. Another critic thinks that, owing to Capulet's real or feigned reluctance to part with his daughter, Shakespeare changed the age in order to give him a better excuse. But Dowden notes that Shakespeare's Marina in *Pericles* is fourteen, that Miranda in *The Tempest* is only fifteen, and elsewhere that Abigail in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, described as "the sweetest flower in Cytherea's field" (cf. iv. 5. 29, below), is fourteen. This seems to indicate that some literary convention guided Shakespeare, although fourteen strikes modern readers as unreasonably young.

11. Cf. Brooke, l. 1860: "Scarce saw she yet full sixteen years: too young to be a bride."

13. *made,* the reading of Q 2, F, against the *married* of Q 1. The quibble between *made* and *mar* occurs in ii. 4. 121–2, below

But there is a similar quibble between *marred* and *married* found in Shakespeare and other writers, as in *All 's Well*, ii. 3. 315: "A young man *married* is a man that 's *marr'd*."

14. ***all my hopes but she.*** Capulet, who is an old man, may have lost some children by a former wife. That Juliet is the only child of the present union is distinctly implied in iii. 5. 166, below. On the other hand, Shakespeare may have made here, as elsewhere, a slip too trivial to be noticed in an acted play.

For the use of *she* where *her* is demanded by strict grammatical laws, cf. Abbott's explanation, § 211, that *she* seemed more like an uninflected noun than *he*.

15. ***lady of my earth***, probably a mere translation of the French expression for heiress, *fille de terre*, with a quibble on *earth* in the previous line. But Dowden takes *earth* to mean "my body," as in ii. 1. 2.

17. ***but a part***, subordinate to. Capulet forgets this speech later. Cf. iii. 5. 150 ff.

23. ***makes.*** Apparently there is confusion as to subject between *you* and *one more*. Cf. Abbott, § 412. Or we may place a semicolon after *store*, in which case *one* would be the subject of the verb.

25. ***earth-treading stars***, *i. e.* "all the admired beauties of Verona."

26. ***young men.*** Johnson suggested the emendation *yeomen*, but Malone compares *Sonnets*, xcviii. 2–3:

> "When proud-pied April dress'd in all his trim
> Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing."

30. ***inherit***, obtain. Cf. *Luke*, xviii. 18: "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

32, 33. The couplet is undoubtedly obscure and has given critics much difficulty. The meaning seems to be, "On further observation of many of these, my daughter may be counted anong the number, though her estimation, or value, will be nothing." The figure *one* was then considered as no number. To show this many passages from Elizabethan writings have been cited, as *Sonnets*, cxxxvi. 8:

> "Among a number one is reckon'd none;
> Then in the number let me pass untold."

45. ***in good time***, at the opportune moment. Just when he needs them he sees coming two men who can probably read the list for him.

46. Cf. *Coriolanus*, iv. 7. 54: "One fire drives out one fire; one nail, one nail." Brooke, l. 207, puts it:

> "And as out of a plank a nail a nail doth drive,
> So novel love out of the mind the ancient love doth rive."

46–51. These lines, like Romeo's speech, ll. 93–8, below, in form and spirit resemble the *sestette*, or concluding six lines of the sonnet as Shakespeare wrote it. Cf. v. 3. 12–17, and v. 3. 305–10, below. Complete sonnets in the play are the Prologue, the Chorus between acts i. and ii., and i. 5. 95–108, below. The presence of these sonnet forms in the text points to early workmanship of Shakespeare, when he was experimenting with metrical forms.

48. *holp*. On this old form where we use the weak preterit *helped*, see Abbott, § 343. The older form is still heard.

49. *cures*, heals; the only instance of the verb used intransitively by Shakespeare.

52. Romeo is not insane, as Benvolio affects to conclude from this remark, but is too busy dreaming of Rosaline to follow closely his friend's observations. Since Benvolio has mentioned "grief" (which sometimes meant a wound), infection, and poison, he suggests a sovereign remedy for physical hurts, *viz.* the plantain leaf.

55–57. These lines indicate the ordinary treatment of madmen by Shakespeare's contemporaries. Readers of *Twelfth Night* will recall how Malvolio is imprisoned and tormented during his supposed madness.

58. *God gi' god-den,* God give you a good evening. According to Schmidt this salutation was used only by the common people to their superiors. Cf. ii. 4. 116, and iii. 5. 173, below.

65. *rest you merry!* God keep you merry, the parting salutation.

70, 72. The names of both Mercutio and Rosaline will be noticed on the list of invited guests. Mercutio seems to be on friendly terms with both of the hostile houses, while Rosaline is a niece to Old Capulet.

86. *crush a cup,* a common expression for drinking, like "crack a bottle" to-day. Compare Shallow's phrase, "crack a quart" in *2 Henry IV*, v. 3. 66.

90. *unattainted, i. e.* impartial.

93–98. See note on ll. 46–51, above.

95 ff. Reference is to Romeo's eyes, which though often drowned in tears still live to maintain their opinion. If Benvolio's state-

ments be true, Romeo would wish the tears to be changed to fire, so that like heretics his eyes might be destroyed. Witches were burned because, according to popular belief, they could not be drowned.

101. *that crystal scales.* For other nouns now plural but used as singular by Shakespeare, see Abbott, § 338.

102. *lady's love.* So read all the old editions. Theobald proposed *lady-love*, an emendation which has met with general favor.

104. *scant,* scarcely; an adverb here.

SCENE 3

The heroine of the play now first appears on the stage in conversation with her mother and a garrulous nurse. News as to Paris's prospective suit is received by her with indifference, as her heart is not now set on marriage. The whole scene clearly looks forward to scene 5 of this act.

3. *lady-bird,* sweetheart; a term of affection. Cf. Jonson, *Cynthia's Revels* (1600; ed. Judson, A. C.), ii. 4. 7: "Is that your new ruffe, sweet lady-bird?"

4. *God forbid!* Probably the true meaning of this ejaculation is that given by Dyce: that the Nurse, not getting any reply to her call, exclaims, "God forbid" that any harm should have come to her darling.

The line is scanned, No. 1, in Appendix D.

7. *give leave awhile,* let us talk awhile in private; a common form of dismissal. Cf. *3 Henry VI*, iii. 2. 33: "Lords, give us leave. I 'll try this widow's wit."

9. *thou 's,* a colloquialism for "Thou shalt." Cf. *Lear*, iv. 6. 246: "Ise try whether your costard or my ballow be the harder," where the first word is a similarly formed contraction for "I shall."

13. *teen.* For meaning see Glossary, and cf. note on i. 2. 9, above. The Nurse employs this word with *four* to bring out the pun.

The line is scanned, No. 2, in Appendix D.

15. *Lammas-tide,* loof-mass, August 1, in England, the time of harvest festival. All the events of the play take place in July or August. This is in harmony with Benvolio's words, iii. 1. 2–4, below.

17. The line is scanned, No. 3, in Appendix D.

23. *since the earthquake . . . eleven years.* The significance of this line in determining the date of the play has already been referred to in the Introduction. It need hardly be said here that from the general character of the Nurse's speech not too much seriousness should be attached to her statements. Although she claims to *bear a brain*, she is garrulity itself, and contradicts herself several times in the course of her remarks. Granting that a reference to *the earthquake* would to the audience imply only the great earthquake of 1580, it does not follow that the play must have been written eleven years later. For if this be true, it is hard to see why the words *eleven years* should have been left unchanged when the play was revised some time after 1591.

25. The line is scanned, No. 4, in Appendix D.

27. Rolfe suggests here a comparison with the words of Dame Quickly where in *2 Henry IV*, ii. 1. 93 ff., she recalls to Falstaff the most exact circumstances of his promising to marry her.

The line is scanned, No. 5, in Appendix D.

29. *bear a brain,* have a good memory. See *N. E. Dict.* under *brain* for other examples of the phrase.

31. *pretty fool.* Fool is used here as a term of endearment, as in the extremely pathetic allusion to Cordelia by her aged father, *Lear*, v. 3. 305: "And my poor fool is dead!"

33. *Shake, quoth the dove-house.* The dove-house shook. Daniel notes the phrase in other dramas of the day, as Peele, *Old Wives' Tale* (ed. Neilson), l. 746: "Bounce, quoth the guns." Exactly the same words are in Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, v. 1. 95.

36. The line is scanned, No. 6, in Appendix D.

alone, the reading of the Folio and late Quartos as opposed to the *high-lone* of Q 1 and *hylone* of Q 2. Many editors prefer the latter reading, which would not alter the sense of the passage. Dowden adopting it quotes *N. E. Dict.* and adds: "Some early examples are of infants, which leads me to conjecture that it was a favorite nursery word, as nurses nowadays encourage a child to stand *loney-proudy.*" The usual substitute for the last word in at least one part of the United States with which I am familiar is *loney-loney*, but I am told that *high-loney* is still not unknown as a synonymous expression. Cf. our idiom, "It 's *high* time," etc., where *high* is used as an intensive.

59. *mark,* designate, elect, as in *Henry V*, iv. 3. 20, "if we are marked to die."

66. *an honour that I dream not of.* Apparently Jonson parodies

this line in *Cynthia's Revels* (ed. Judson), iv. 1. 31: "'t is an *animall* I dreame not of." The italics of the one word changed are Jonson's.

72. ***much upon these years,*** almost at the same age. How old does this make Lady Capulet? Her husband is evidently much older.

76. ***man of wax, i. e.*** perfect. The meaning is given in a passage cited by Dyce from *Faire Em*, an anonymous drama once attributed to Shakespeare:

> "A sweet face, an exceeding daintie hand:
> A body, were it framed of wax
> By all the cunning artists of the world,
> It could not better be proportioned."

Dowden quotes Field, *A Woman is a Weathercock:* "By Jove, it is a little man of wax."

81–94. "Shakespeare was evidently fond of resembling the face to a book, and having once arrived at this similitude, the comparison, however odd, of the eyes to the margin, wherein of old the commentary on the text was printed, is not altogether unnatural. This passage, which presents both the primary and the subordinate metaphor, is the best example he has given of this peculiar association of ideas" (Staunton). Cf. i. 1. 241–2, above, where Rosaline's face is compared to a note. The large number of conceits in the passage point to its composition during the immaturity of the author, and when euphuism was in vogue.

83. ***married lineament,*** all the members of his body well harmonized. This reading, since the figure is consistent with the tone of the whole speech, seems more satisfactory than the *several lineament* of Q 1 and Ff, adopted by some editors.

86. ***margent of his eyes.*** Malone quotes *Lucrece*, 99–102:

> "But she that never coped with stranger eyes,
> Could pick no meaning from their parling looks,
> Nor read the subtle-shining secrecies
> Writ in the glassy *margents* of such books."

88. ***cover.*** Probably, as Mason suggests, this is merely a quibble on the contemporary French law phrase for a married woman, who was styled a *feme covert*.

89. ***lives in the sea.*** Probably she means that the bride was yet to be caught, alluding to the familiar proverb.

96. ***like of.*** Abbott, § 177, gives other instances of this idiom in Shakespeare. Formerly it was customary to say, "It likes me of the man," rather than "I like the man." Abbott thinks the phrase in question may have originated in this impersonal use of the verb.

98. ***endart.*** Pope preferred *engage* found in Q 1, but the present reading merely begins the figure from archery which is continued in the next line.

SCENE 4

Of little dramatic importance is this scene, though it contains one notable poetic passage. Then it introduces the high-spirited Mercutio, henceforth to play a leading rôle in the plot. In Brooke Mercutio is a rival of Romeo, but Shakespeare, while using him as a foil to both Benvolio and Romeo, makes him the indirect cause of Tybalt's death, and so of Romeo's banishment.

1. ***this speech.*** Furness suggests *the speech*, but there is not sufficient reason for emendation. Romeo perhaps feels the need of an *apology* more than his companions do, since it is the home of his father's chief enemy which he is entering uninvited.

3. ***prolixity,*** tedious detail. It was customary for maskers on coming to a feast to send in some one to announce their arrival. Thus in *Henry VIII*, i. 4. 65, the Chamberlain announces in stately words the coming of the King and his fellow-maskers; and in *Timon of Athens*, i. 2. 128, Cupid is the forerunner of "certain ladies most desirous of admittance."

4. ***hoodwink'd,*** blindfolded; the literal meaning of the word, from *hood* + *winked*.

5. ***a Tartar's painted bow.*** "The Tartarian bows . . . resembled in their form the old Roman or Cupid's bow, such as we see on medals and bas-reliefs. Shakespeare uses the epithet to distinguish it from the English bow, whose shape is the segment of a circle" (Douce).

"***Lath*** means here wood; but bows were regularly made of this material. Perhaps Shakespeare was thinking of the 'dagger of lath' used by the Vice in the moralities, and used *lath* to fill out his line without special regard to the context." Cf. *Twelfth Night*, iv. 2. 134 ff.:

> "Like to the old Vice . . .
> Who with dagger of lath,
> In his rage and his wrath,
> Cries, ah, ha! to the devil."

6. *like,* in the shape of. Compare *Macbeth*, i. 3. 9–10, where the First Witch threatens:

> "And, like a rat without a tail,
> I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do."

crow-keeper = scarecrow.

7, 8. These lines evidently have more than a literal significance, and two interpretations of them are possible. It is sometimes suggested that the dramatist may be striking at actors who in a *without-book prologue* would speak "more than is set down for them." Compare the advice to the players in *Hamlet*, iii. 2. 42 ff. But Professor E. K. Chambers regards this explanation as "not likely," and adds, "The reference is to a Prologue speaker who does n't know his lines." This last interpretation would explain why the actor without the book in his hands speaks *faintly . . . after the prompter.*

8. *entrance,* a trisyllable. See Appendix D, and cf. *Macbeth*, i. 5. 40: "That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan."

11. *a torch.* Every troop of maskers had its torchbearer. So Jessica in male attire carries the torch for Lorenzo and his company of maskers in *The Merchant of Venice*, ii. 6. Romeo is affecting too melancholy a mood to take part in the vanity of his fellows.

12. *heavy . . . light,* a quibble which apparently age could not wither nor custom stale for the Elizabethan. The numerous puns in this scene will not escape any careful reader; *e. g. measure, measure; soles, soul; sore, soar; bound, bound; done, dun.* While such puns occur more frequently in Shakespeare's earlier than in his later plays, the dramatist employed them till the last.

21. *pitch,* literally = point, but it probably continues the figure from falconry expressed or implied in lines 18–22.

30. *a visor for a visor!* Possibly, as some explain, an ugly mask is handed to Mercutio and he takes it. Others think that he dons no mask on account of his fantastic face. Littledale makes the plausible suggestion to punctuate with an exclamation point after l. 29, as Mercutio refuses the offered mask.

31. *quote,* notice, observe; cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, iv. 5. 233: "I have . . . quoted joint by joint."

36. *rushes,* used then on floors as we use carpets.

38. *a candle-holder,* idle spectator, like our "wall-flower." Romeo is *proverb'd* with this *grandsire phrase.*

40. *dun 's the mouse.* Malone cites *Patient Grissel* (1603); "don is the mouse, lie still." He adds, "I know not why, this phrase

seems to have meant 'Peace; be still!' and hence it may be said to be 'the constable's own word' while apprehending an offender and afraid of alarming him by any noise." The origin of the phrase is still unsettled, but as the mouse is dun-colored and proverbially quiet, some connection between the two qualities may have been supposed. Of course, Mercutio characteristically goes far astray to employ the pun.

41. Having quibbled once with *dun*, Mercutio thinks of another proverb founded on the common use of the word, like Dobbin, as the name of an old horse, "to draw Dun out of the mire." Gifford describes a Christmas game which he himself played and which was so called. The object of the game was to lift Dun, a log which had been brought into the midst of the room, and take it out. The fun arose from letting the log fall on some one's toes. A friendly critic has called my attention to the fact that in another Elizabethan play, *Sir John Oldcastle*, v. 3, one of the characters, Dick Dunne, is mired in a slough, but I cannot see that the passage sheds much light on the expression. The proverb is as old as Chaucer, for in the prologue to the *Manciple's Tale*, are found the words, "Dun is in the mire."

42. *Of this sir-reverence.* So Q 1; other early editions *Or save your* [or *you*] *reverence.* In either case we have a translation or contraction of the Latin ablative absolute, *salvā reverentiā.* It was a common form of apology for the introduction of any impropriety in conversation, and later came to take on the meaning of the improper words themselves. Exactly what Mercutio intends to signify will perhaps not bear too close examination.

43. *burn daylight,* to light a candle while the sun is shining; figuratively used of wasting time, as Mercutio explains.

47. *five wits,* employed sometimes as synonymous with the five senses, and again, according to Stephen Hawes (1554) as the intellectual faculties or five inlets of ideas, "common wit, imagination, fantasy, estimation (or judgment), and memory." The expression here seems to bear the second interpretation. Mercutio says they are burning daylight; Romeo, taking the remark literally, denies it since they have their candles lighted at night. Mercutio begs him to consider the speeches with regard to their meaning, and find his judgment there rather than among the intellectual faculties. A recent illuminating discussion in this field is Dowden's article on "Elizabethan Psychology" in *The Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 100, pp. 388–99.

50. *dream'd a dream.* Romeo is superstitious by nature, and

he fears the result of this masking from the start. Since the audience must have known the story well, the effect of this speech would not be lost on them.

51. Note the contrast between the two friends. Compare the conversation on the same subject between the cock and the hen in Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale.*

53 ff. Is there any reason why this long speech of Mercutio's should be introduced into the conversation here? Q 1 inserts after l. 53 a query of Benvolio, "Queen Mab, what's she?" But even with this reading the passage is scarcely justified from a dramatic standpoint, and it must be taken as a lyrical outburst illustrating the ebullient fancy of the author at this stage. It is in much the same strain as the fairy scenes of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

53. *Queen Mab,* a familiar personage in Celtic folklore, but there has not been found in English literature any earlier reference to her than this. Drayton's *Nymphidia* (1597) contains a description of her chariot, apparently imitated from Shakespeare. Professor Chambers, in his edition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* of this series, p. 144, has an interesting note on the various names of the fairy queen, there called Titania. He observes that the present account of Mab "has many points which resemble the characteristics of the domestic spirit as found in Robin Goodfellow."

54. *fairies' midwife.* Not to the fairies, but the fairy, herself, who delivers dreamers of their fancies, those *children of an idle brain,* l. 97.

55. *agate-stone,* a figure cut in the agate of a ring. So in *2 Henry IV,* i. 2. 19, Falstaff, complaining of the diminutive size of his page, exclaims, "I was never manned with an agate until now."

59. *spinners',* spiders'. Compare Latimer's words: "Where the bee gathereth honey, even there the spinner gathereth venome." So also *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* ii. 2. 21: "Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence!"

63. *film,* "the thin skin which separates the seed in the pods" (Schmidt).

66. *lazy finger,* an allusion to the popular belief that idle young women were apt to have worms in their fingers.

77. *courtier's.* Pope tries to avoid the repetition here by substituting *lawyer's,* the reading of Q 1, but that word is open to precisely the same objection, being used in l. 73, above. The

repetition may not have been intentional, but there is no necessity for emendation.

85. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, v. 3. 56–7 :

> " Fill the cup, and let it come ;
> I 'll pledge you a mile to the bottom."

89. According to Douce reference is made to a superstition that evil spirits, taking the form of women clothed in white, haunted stables in the night-time, carrying in their hands tapers of wax, which they dropped on the horses' manes, thereby plaiting them in inextricable knots.

90. ***elf-locks,*** hairs believed to have been tangled by fairies or elves.

91. ***bodes.*** The real subject of this verb, *which*, is plural, but the notion of entangling gives a singular verb-form. See Abbott, § 337.

100. ***who.*** See note on i. 1. 119, above.

103. ***face.*** Is this word or *side* better? The latter has the authority of all the early editions except Q 1, from which Pope restored the present reading.

dew-dropping south. For some reason Shakespeare seems to have associated the south with dampness, mist, and contagion. So he has, *As You Like It*, iii. 5. 50, " Like foggy south puffing with wind and rain "; *2 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 392, " Like the south, Borne with black vapour "; *Troilus and Cressida*, v. 1. 21, " The rotten diseases of the south "; *2 Henry VI*, iii. 2. 384, " And with the southern clouds contend in tears "; *Coriolanus*, i. 4. 30, " All the contagion of the south light on you "; *Cymbeline*, ii. 3. 136, " The south-fog rot him "; and *Cymbeline*, iv. 2. 349, " From the spongy south."

106. Again Romeo displays his fatalism. We were informed in the Prologue that this was " a pair of star-cross'd lovers."

109. ***expire,*** cause to expire, finish. Dowden cites Lyly, *Euphues* (Arber, p. 77): " To swill the drink that will expyre thy date."

111. The folios add a stage-direction: *They march about the stage, and Servingmen come forth with their napkins.* After some frolicsome horse play they were to leave the stage and the next scene was to follow immediately.

SCENE 5

A series of pictures of the feasting, dancing, and parleying at Capulet's banquet forms, from the spectacular standpoint, one of the most effective scenes in the play. But despite the prevailing tone of happiness in the first meeting of Romeo and Juliet, the inevitable love resulting on both sides is accompanied by a note of tragedy, not only in the threats of Tybalt, the chief antagonist, but also in the mental forebodings of evil that come to both lovers.

1. As in the opening scene, a touch of realism is added by beginning the action with a conversation between servants. Of this conversation there is no hint in any known source.

8. *court-cupboard,* a movable cupboard used for the display of plate.

good thou. See Abbott, § 13, for similar instances of the vocative use of good.

16. *the longer liver take all.* Let him who lasts longer get the whole reward — a familiar proverb of the time.

18. *gentlemen,* a dissyllable: see Appendix D, No. 7, for scansion of line.

21. *deny,* refuse, as in *The Taming of the Shrew*, ii. 1. 180: "If she deny to wed, I 'll crave the day When I shall ask the bans."

makes dainty, affects timidity.

22. *come near you,* Does the cap fit you? Compare *1 Henry IV*, i. 2. 14: "Indeed you come near me now, Hal."

28. *a hall!* Make room!

29. *turn the tables up.* "The tables in that day were flat leaves hinged together and placed on trestles; when removed they were therefore turned up" (Steevens).

30. *quench the fire.* Why should a fire be burning in an Italian house in midsummer? The answer is that in Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet* the feast at Capilet's house occurs when "weary winter nights restore the Christmas games." Shakespeare in shortening the time of action and placing the feast in the hot season probably overlooked this slight anachronism. He was not in the habit of watching such details with the modern critic's eye.

32. *cousin.* Capulet is really his uncle, for see i. 2. 71, above, but the term "cousin" was then used of almost any relative. Later Lady Capulet calls Tybalt her cousin although he is her nephew.

37. *nuptial,* nuptials, wedding; the usual form of the noun in Shakespeare.

43 ff. Fuller compares the *Romeo en Juliette* of Struijs, translating from this Dutch play (see Appendix C) as follows: "There for the first time I beheld my love, who like a silver moon shone down upon her mates. Next other jewels a brilliant diamond she appeared. Her two eyes I saw sparkle as gleam Castor and Pollux on high."

45. ***knight.*** Cf. Brooke here: "With torch in hand a comely knight did lead her forth to dance."

47. ***It seems she hangs.*** This is the reading of all the Quartos and of F 1. Some editors prefer that of F 2, *Her beauty hangs*, etc. There appears to be little to choose between the two readings, but that of the text is certainly the more authoritative. Cf. *Sonnets* xxvii, ll. 11–12:

> "Which like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
> Makes black night hideous and her old face new."

53. In older versions of the story Romeo seizes her left hand while Mercutio holds the right.

56 ff. For corresponding lines in the Dutch play, see Appendix C.

57. ***what dares,*** how dares. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 950: "What may a heavy groan advantage thee?" Theobald, followed by some modern editors, punctuates, *What! dares*, etc.

58. ***antic face.*** Tybalt refers to the mask which Romeo had donned; "a grinning face, such as merry-andrews wear" (Delius).

59. ***solemnity.*** See Glossary.

64. ***in spite,*** "only to defy and provoke us" (Schmidt). Cf. i. 1. 85, above.

68. ***portly,*** "of a good deportment, well-behaved, well-bred" (Schmidt).

78. This little incident serves to bring out clearly the contrast between Old Capulet and his fiery nephew. With the same bitter hatred of the Montagues that controls Tybalt, the uncle is held in check by his regard for the laws of hospitality.

81. ***mend my soul,*** amend or save my soul. Cf. *As You Like It*, iv. 1. 193: "by my troth, and in good earnest, and so God mend me, and by all pretty oaths that are not dangerous."

83. ***set cock-a-hoop,*** set all by the ears. Though a great deal has been written about the last word, its etymology is still doubtful. See article on the subject in *N. E. D.*

87. ***contrary,*** cross, act in opposition to. The verb is fairly common among Elizabethan writers.

91. ***patience perforce,*** endurance of irremediable ills; a proverbial expression.

94. ***convert.*** Lettsom takes *sweet* as a substantive, and *convert* as a transitive verb, but the latter was frequently used intransitively; cf. *Lucrece*, 592: "Stones dissolved to water do convert."

95–108. Note the Shakespearian sonnet-structure of the lines. Cf. note on i. 2. 46–51, above.

96. ***fine.*** Emended by Theobald from the older *sin* or *sinne;* Herford and Dowden retain the original reading. The present text would give the meaning of "pleasing punishment." However, Dowden explains sin, "To touch Juliet at all is sin; but the profanation with Romeo's hand is a rough sin; to touch with his lips is 'the gentle sin.'"

104. ***pilgrim.*** Halliwell-Phillips prints a cut from Inigo Jones, a famous Elizabethan architect and coadjutor of Ben Jonson, showing the acted Romeo in this scene attired in pilgrim's garb. This was a conventional disguise, and is employed to-day in the acting of *The Winter's Tale*, iv. 4, by King Polixenes and Camillo.

112. ***by the book,*** according to rule.

119. ***chinks,*** used colloquially as a term for money.

120. The Cambridge editors doubt the genuineness of this line, but cf. Brooke at this point, l. 325: "Thus hath his foe in choice to give him life or death." Note the word-play in *account* and *debt.*

124. ***banquet.*** Here the meaning is "dessert," a course of sweetmeats, fruit and wine; cf. *Timon of Athens*, i. 2. 160: "Ladies, an idle banquet attends you."

125. ***Is it e'en so?*** According to the old stage-directions they "whisper in his ear" probably the reason for their departure.

142. ***prodigious,*** portentous; cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 1. 419: "Nor mark prodigious."

ACT II. PROLOGUE

In the original editions the play is not divided into acts and scenes, and some editors of the play prefer to place this prologue at the end of Act i, rather than at the beginning of the second act. It really makes no material difference. Since the lines are so commonplace and serve so little dramatic purpose, it is seriously questioned whether they were written by Shakespeare. Like the Prologue to Act i, the lines are in sonnet form.

3. *fair.* Steevens reads it as a dissyllable, and omits the *for*, but emendation is unnecessary. *Fair* signifies a beautiful woman, a common meaning for the word in Shakespeare and as late as the eighteenth century.

for which love groaned for. Such duplications of a preposition are common in Elizabethan literature; cf. *As You Like It*, ii. 7. 138: "The scene wherein we play in."

SCENE 1

This short scene shows Romeo's escape from his friends into Capulet's garden. It also occupies time between Capulet's feast and Juliet's soliloquy after retiring the same night. Benvolio again serves as foil to Mercutio.

2. *dull earth,* figurative for Romeo's body, the centre of which is his heart, lost to Juliet.

5. *orchard,* garden. So in *Julius Cæsar*, iii. 2. 253, Antony speaks of Cæsar's gardens as his "new-planted orchards." But Capulet's garden contains fruit-trees, as ii. 2. 108 shows.

6. *conjure.* Here we accent the first syllable of the word, but in l. 23 the last syllable. In Elizabethan English the modern distinction in meaning between the two pronunciations of this word did not exist.

13. *Adam Cupid.* Qq. Ff. read *Abraham Cupid* or *Abraham: Cupid.* Upton proposed the emendation, which has been accepted by most editors. Cupid is given the nickname Adam because of his likeness to another famous archer, Adam Bell, celebrated in ballad poetry, and bearing many points of resemblance to Robin Hood. In *Much Ado*, i. 1. 260, just after alluding to "blind Cupid," Benedick cries, "Shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder, and called Adam." But it is not certain that the reading of all the earlier editions is wrong. Neilson prefers it, Dowden is uncertain. Some topical allusion now lost may lie in the name. Again, as White shows, "auburn" was sometimes spelled *abrun*, *abran*, *abram*, and even *Abraham*. Thus the meaning may be "the light-haired Cupid."

14. *King Cophetua,* an allusion to another contemporary ballad, *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid*, to be found complete in Percy's *Reliques*, and again referred to in *Love's Labour's Lost*, i. 2. 114: "Is there not a ballad, boy, of the King and the Beggar?" One stanza runs:

"The blinded boy that shoots so trim
From heaven down did hie,
He drew a dart and shot at him,
In place where he did lye."

This makes certain the reading *trim* in l. 13, above, which is adopted from Q 1, as opposed to the *true* of other Qq.

16. ***ape,*** a word used with a connotation of tenderness as applied to young men, in much the same way as the Nurse uses *fool*, i. 3, 31, above. Nash writes of the time "when I was a little ape at Cambridge."

24. ***circle,*** a magician's ring. Cf. *As You Like It*, ii. 5. 62: "'T is a Greek invocation to call fools into a circle."

31. To be associated with the moist or humid night. *Humourous*, of course, contains a word-play; cf. l. 7, above.

40. ***field-bed.*** Mercutio means the ground; he says he would prefer the small comfort of a trundle-bed. It is worth noting that in Brooke the Nurse brings a real field-bed into Juliet's chamber.

SCENE 2

On account of the marvellous poetic beauty of the lines, the personal charms of Juliet, and the perfect setting in a moon-lit Italian garden, this "balcony scene" is with readers of the play as well as theatre-goers the most popular of the whole drama. In it the heroine inadvertently reveals her love to Romeo, but is too frank by nature to unsay any of her speeches when she finds that they have been overheard. As a result the lovers at once plan marriage, despite each one's presentiment that all will not go well with them.

2. Fuller sees here again the influence of the 1560 (?) English play which served as a prototype for the Dutch play of Struijs. See Appendix C.

7. ***her maid,*** a votary of Diana.

8. ***sick and green.*** Q 1 reads "pale and green," which Collier would emend to "white and green," on the ground that these were the colors worn by Elizabethan court fools. The change is scarcely justifiable, the meaning of the phrase being rather "chlorotic," as Schmidt defines it.

15. ***two of the fairest stars.*** Fuller compares Romeo's words to those of Phebidas (Mercutio) in the Dutch play: "Her two

eyes I saw sparkle as gleam Castor and Pollux on high." Cf. also i. 5. 46, above.

24. *that I were a glove.* According to Dr. Fuller this conceit, like several others in the play, is a characteristic Petrarchism, and is found in many contemporary sonnets written by the English imitators of Petrarch. Conceits are abundant in Romeo's speeches throughout this scene, but they are generally absent from Juliet's, whose language from the outset is more direct than that of her lover.

25. *Ay me!* See note on i. 1. 167, and cf. ii. 1. 10, above.

31–2. The same figure is in *Macbeth*, i. 7. 22–3, "heaven's cherubin, horsed Upon the sightless couriers of the air."

31. *lazy-pacing*, Pope's restoration from Q 1. Is it not a better reading than the *lazie-puffing* of other Qq Ff?

39. Malone prefers to place the comma after *though* and take the latter word in its sense of "however." Most editors accept the present reading. By changing his hateful name he will lose none of his personality.

42. *belonging to a man.* For metre, see Appendix D.

46. *owe,* own, possess. Cf. *The Comedy of Errors*, iii. 1. 42, "keepest me out from the house I owe."

53. *counsel,* secrets, as frequently in Shakespeare and older English.

55. *dear saint.* He is thinking of the conversation they have had a few minutes ago in Capulet's hall.

61. *dislike.* For the impersonal use cf. Abbott, § 297, and see note on i. 3. 96, above.

64. Note Juliet's care for her lover's safety.

69. *let,* stop, obstacle; as in the familiar legal phrase, "without let or hindrance."

76. *but thou love.* The first word means "except." Malone is clearly mistaken in interpreting the line, "And so thou do but love me, I care not what may befall."

78. *wanting of.* On the use of the preposition with certain participles which are considered verbal nouns, compare Abbott, § 178.

83. In this imaginative passage lies a great deal of the feeling that prompted Francis Drake and other sixteenth-century voyagers.

84. *adventure,* venture, dare.

Fuller compares Romeo's love-making in Struijs, translating: "Thou, O Goddess, art the sole beacon towards which I sail. Wilt thou unpityingly withhold thy light from my eye, then must my

ship, to my ruin, perish; for unless some haven be at hand, its freight will sink to the depths."

89. *farewell compliment,* away with conventionalities!

93. *at lovers' perjuries . . . Jove laughs,* a common proverb of the time, found in Marlowe's translation of Ovid, and several times in the writings of Robert Greene.

101. *to be strange,* to appear shy, reserved. Steevens quotes Greene's *Mammilia* (1583): "Is it the fashion in Padua to be so strange with your friends?"

106. *discovered,* uncovered, revealed; the usual meaning in early English. Cf. iii. 1. 147, below.

dark night. Note the quibble with *light* above.

107. *by yonder blessed moon.* Similarly in *Richard III*, iv. 4. 366: Richard, wooing the Princess Elizabeth through her mother, proffers several oaths, all of which are rejected as insufficient sureties of his truth. In *The Merchant of Venice*, v. 1. 142, Gratiano swears "by yonder moon," and in the same scene Bassanio, taking Portia's eyes for his byword, is answered, 245–6:

> "swear by your double self,
> And there 's an oath of credit."

116. Fuller shows that Juliet's presentiment of coming ill at this point occurs in Struijs.

117. *contract.* For the accent see Appendix D.

119, 120. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 1. 145, the joys resulting from love are said to be:

> "Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
> That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,
> And ere a man have power to say, 'Behold!'
> The jaws of darkness do devour it up."

131. *frank,* generous; as in *King Lear*, iii. 4. 20: "Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all."

133–5. Cf. Juliet's words, ii. 6. 32–4, below.

139. *I am afeard.* One should not overlook these frequent presentiments of coming disaster, nor forget that the audience, knowing the story beforehand, would understand them in the way they were intended.

142–8. It is Juliet that takes the initiative. The words of this speech are adopted almost directly from Brooke, but there is about them a refinement, a delicacy, not found in the poem.

151. *By and by*, immediately. The phrase to-day signifies a longer wait.

152. *suit*. This is Malone's emendation from the older *strife*, and is made practically certain by the corresponding passage in Brooke, "to cease your suit."

158. A similar picture is given in *As You Like It*, ii. 7. 146–7, of the schoolboy "creeping like snail unwillingly to school."

162 ff. Fuller calls attention to the corresponding scene in Struijs, where Romeo thus addresses the night: "Come, thou dark shroud, as is thy wont, and cover with thy shadow the half of this world's orb; while I in lonely gloom make echo rewail my own lament, in the innermost of Venus' temple, where my Juliette is."

167. *attending*, listening, attentive; as in *Titus Andronicus*, v. 3. 82: "He did discourse To love-sick Dido's sad attending ear."

178. *wanton*. See Glossary.

189. *ghostly*. See Glossary.

190. *dear hap*, *i. e.* good happening, good fortune.

SCENE 3

The Friar reluctantly promises to officiate at a secret wedding, in order to reconcile the hostile families. His long soliloquy, showing his knowledge of herbs "and their true qualities," makes more plausible his suggestion to Juliet of the sleeping potion in iv. 1.

1. Fuller argues that Shakespeare is directly indebted here to the English prototype of Struijs. In the latter play immediately after a scene in which Romeo takes leave of Juliet at break of day, the Friar is discovered in front of his cell soliloquizing: "The black curtains of heaven's dome fall down towards the west, letting the eastern sky grow pleasant with light. The messenger of the sun begins to color the horizon a fiery glow. Each bird draws out its head from under its wing and hops from branch to branch, and with its sweet voice sings the praise of God." His meditations are interrupted by the entrance of Romeo. There is nothing to suggest this in Brooke or in Painter.

1–6. A profitable study might be made of Shakespeare's descriptions of the early morning. Cf., for example, i. 1. 125 ff., above; iii. 5. 7–10, below; *Julius Cæsar*, ii. 1. 101 ff.; *Hamlet*, i. 1. 166–7; *Much Ado*, v. 3. 25–7; *Sonnets*, vii, xxxiii, xxxiv.

2. *chequering*, *i. e.* the lights and shadows resembled a checker board. Milton's "chequered shade" carries the same figure.

3. *darkness like a drunkard reels.* In *Sonnets*, vii. 9–10, it is the sun at its setting that "from highmost pitch, with weary car, like feeble age . . . reeleth from the day."

7. *osier cage of ours*, this basket belonging to the order. The Franciscans held all their property in common.

9–10. Compare Milton's *Paradise Lost*, ii. 911: "The womb of nature and perhaps her grave."

22. *sometimes.* Capell reads *sometime's.*

25. *that part.* Either the odorous part of the flower, or else the part of the body that one smells with.

27. *encamp them still,* are always encamped. For other instances of verbs used reflexively, see Abbott, § 296.

28. *grace and rude will.* Such a theological reference would be more intelligible to an Elizabethan audience than to one to-day. They mean about the same as "virtue" and "evil desires." Spoken by the Friar these reflections seem thoroughly in character.

29. *worser,* not an infrequent form in Shakespeare. It occurs again, iii. 2. 108, below.

30. *canker.* See Glossary.

Enter Romeo. Early editions place his entrance after l. 22.

31. In Struijs the Friar replies to Romeo's salutation: "*Deo gratias*, my son. What brings thee here so early? This strikes me as most strange."

37. *unbruised,* undamaged, uninjured; *unstuff'd*, not too heavily loaded.

51. *both our remedies*, a remedy for both of us. See Abbott, § 219, and cf. *Hamlet*, iii. 1. 42, "both your honours," *i. e.* "the honor of both of you."

52. *lies.* For the form see Abbott, § 335. The singular is employed because the verb precedes its subject as in i. 1. 38, above.

54. *steads,* assists, serves. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, i. 3. 7: "May you stead me?"

55. *homely in thy drift,* plain in your speech.

68. The conventional Elizabethan "debate" between *hearts* and *eyes* is discussed at length by Professor J. H. Hanford in *Modern Language Notes*, xxvi, 161–5. Compare the correspondence in *The Nation* (New York), for March 30 and April 27, 1911. Shakespeare particularly alludes to this debate in *Sonnets*, xlvi, xlvii, and cxli, and again in *The Merchant of Venice*, iii. 2. 63 ff. In general, love of the eyes seems to indicate mere fancy, and love of the heart, genuine affection. See also i. 2. 92, above.

72. *season love.* Shakespeare uses the same figure again in

All 's Well, i. 1. 55, where the Countess declares tears to be "the best brine a maiden can season her praise in."

76. *yet.* As the rhyme indicates, the pronunciation was "yit." This was the regular spelling in the time of Chaucer.

88. *read by rote,* you knew only a few phrases learned by heart, and had not been taught the real meaning of love.

90. *in one respect,* on one consideration, which is named in the next line.

92. *to turn,* as to turn. See Abbott, § 281.

93. *stand on sudden haste,* must be in great haste.

SCENE 4

This scene, which in time closely follows the last, occupying a slightly later hour of the morning after Capulet's feast, is structurally divided at the point where the Nurse enters. The objects of the first half are to show the transformation wrought in Romeo by Juliet's love and to tell of the challenge sent to him by Tybalt. The second part completes arrangements for the wedding. Much of the scene is satire directed against contemporary Englishmen who affect Italianate methods of dueling.

2. *to-night,* last night; another illustration of the usage is in i. 4. 50, above.

12. *dares . . . dared,* a mere quibble; the first means "challenges," the second, "ventured."

15. *thorough,* another spelling of the preposition *through.*

pin, centre; a term from archery. "The clout, or white mark at which arrows were directed, was fastened by a black pin placed in the centre" (Malone). Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 1. 138: "Then will she get the upshoot by cleaving the pin."

19. *prince of cats,* a play on Tybalt's name. Sir Tybert, another form of the word, is the name of the cat in the beast-fable of *Reynard the Fox.* Parallel passages have been cited from Dekker, *Satiromastix* (1602): "Tho' you were Tybert, the long-tail'd prince of cats"; and Nash, *Have with You to Saffron Walden* (1596): "Not Tybalt, prince of cats."

20. *captain of complements.* He knows all the formalities of dueling. Compare ii. 2. 89, above. The modern distinction in spelling and sense between *compliment* and *complement* did not exist in the sixteenth century.

21–2. ***time, distance, and proportion.*** Steevens quotes from Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour*, i. 4, where Bobadil is teaching Matthew to fence: "Note your distance, keep your due proportion of time."

22. ***rests me.*** *Me* is the meaningless "ethical dative," of which further examples are given by Abbott, § 220.

24. ***butcher of a silk button.*** Staunton cites Silver's *Paradoxes of Defence* (1599): "Thou that takest upon thee to hit anie Englishman with a thrust upon anie button."

25. ***of the very first house***, of the first rank, probably; though, as Dyce shows, the phrase was sometimes used of upstart gentlemen.

26. ***first and second cause, i. e.*** of the quarrel. In *As You Like It*, v. 4. 70 ff., Touchstone enumerates the seven causes or degrees of quarreling "by the book." In Jonson's *The Alchemist*, Kastril, a country boy, willingly pays Subtle for instruction in the art of quarreling. Throughout Europe in Shakespeare's time the practice of dueling prevailed so commonly that works like the treatises of Saviolo and Caranza were written as guide-books to the science, and schools were established for the teaching of its fine points. In England especially the practice had been introduced along with other vicious customs from Italy; three "Italian teachers of offence" are said to have been living in London by 1599. The terms *passado*, a thrust, *punto reverso*, a back-handed stroke, *hay*, a home-thrust, which are explained in the Glossary, are of Italian origin. Mercutio's ridicule is directed not against the practice of dueling, of which he himself is an adept, but against the study of it in these Italianate schools. Of course, Mercutio speaks not as a Veronese, but as an Elizabethan Londoner, and his hits at a local fashion are not lost on his audience.

29. ***affecting,*** affected, using affectation. Cf. *Merry Wives*, ii. 1. 145: "I never heard such a drawling, affecting rogue."

31. ***tall,*** valiant, sturdy; a frequent sense in Shakespeare.

33. ***grandsire.*** Mercutio addresses the sober Benvolio as one of an elder generation who has known better times.

34. ***flies.*** The term is explained in the words that follow it. Dowden notes that Hamlet calls the shallow Osric a "water-fly" in *Hamlet*, v. 2. 84, while courtiers are denominated "gilded butterflies" in *Lear*, v. 3. 13.

35. ***perdona mi's,*** Italian for "pardon-me's." Qq. 4, 5 read *pardona-mees*, Q 2 has *pardons mees*, F *pardon-mee's*. Theobald emended to *pardonnez-mois*, which is accepted by many editors as

a hit at the Frenchified fashions of Englishmen. The Cambridge editors, however, believe that the present reading is in harmony with the Italian terms, a few lines above.

36. *form.* Remembering that this word is sometimes used of a long bench with no back, note the quibble with the word *bench* in the line just below.

37. *bones,* the reading of Qq. F, but some editors follow Theobald in emending to *bon's*, the French word that men shouted on seeing a good stroke.

39. *without his roe.* Some suggest that this means that Romeo has lost his roe, or female deer (dear); others, that the first syllable of his name is gone, leaving only "me O!" or "O me!" the sigh. In either case Mercutio's pun is far-fetched.

45. *grey eye or so.* Thisbe was rather handsome, but that is neither here nor there. Such is the general meaning of the passage. Grey eyes were then greatly admired, but whether or not the color was the same as the word now indicates, is a disputed question.

47–8. *gave us the counterfeit.* Halliwell-Phillips quotes Nash's *Jack Wilton* (1594): "Aie me shee was but a counterfeit slip, for she . . . gave me the slip"; and Guilpin's *Skialetheia* (1598): "Is he not fond then which a slip receaves For currant money?"

55. *strain courtesy.* Note the word-play with *constrains court'sy*, below.

59. *kindly,* "naturally, in a manner suited to the character or occasion, pertinently" (Schmidt).

64. *flowered.* His dancing shoe was pinked, that is, perforated. Cf. *Henry VIII*, v. 4. 50, "railed upon me till her pinked porringer fell off her head."

65–70. Puns are in abundance here. Romeo is to *follow, i. e.* to ponder over the joke till he has *worn out* his shoe, that when its *single sole* is worn, the joke alone may remain. *Single*, besides its present meaning, may have the sense of simple, silly; another quibble lies between *sole* and *soul*. So Romeo's reply means that Mercutio's jest is absolutely alone in its kind for silliness. On *single-soled* Malone quotes Holinshed's *Ireland*, p. 23: "A meane tower might sewe such single-soale kings as were at that time in Ireland." Literally the word means "having but a single sole," hence exceedingly poor, then mean, contemptible, as here.

73. Romeo advises Mercutio to urge on his fainting wits with *switch and spur*, or else acknowledge defeat in the wit-combat. On

wits, l. 72, cf. note on i. 4. 47, above. Some editors follow Q 1 in reading *wits fail*.

75. *wild-goose chase.* According to Dyce, the name was originally applied to one kind of horse race, in which the horses were started together, the rider who gained the lead forcing the other to follow him wherever he chose to go.

78. *Was I with you, etc.* Did my remark about the goose hit you?

81. *bite . . . by the ear,* an expression of endearment (Schmidt).

82. *good goose, bite not,* a proverb of the day, found in Ray's collection.

91. *broad goose.* The pun may have some reference to a brood, or breeding, goose, as *broad* was often spelled *broode* or *brood*. It may mean an obvious goose, or an unrestrained goose. Delius and Collier prefer the reading of F, *abroad*, construing it, "far and wide abroad — goose."

93–4. *now art thou Romeo.* Cf. i. 1. 204: "This is not Romeo, he 's some other where." The transformation noted by Mercutio must be apparent to every reader. The development of Romeo's character is perhaps the most interesting theme for study in the whole play, but he does not reach full maturity until the news is brought to him of Juliet's supposed death.

96. *natural*, idiot, fool. So *As You Like It*, i. 2. 57: [Nature] "hath sent this natural for our whetstone."

112. *My fan, Peter.* Fans were large enough in those days for ladies of quality, and those like the Nurse, who aped them, to have special fan-bearers. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 1. 147: "To see him walk before a lady and to bear her fan."

115. *God ye good morrow*, God give you a good morning; a form of salute used only by the lower classes to their superiors. Of course Mercutio employs a similar form in reply only for the purpose of mocking the old Nurse. *Good den*, as explained in a note to i. 2. 58, is the contraction for "Good evening." This latter salutation was then used, as it is in rural England and in the Southern states to-day, at any time after noon.

121–2. *God hath made for himself to mar.* Qq, followed by some modern editors, omit the *for*. The Nurse's reply as well as the sense of the passage makes the emendation very plausible. See note on i. 2. 13 above.

133. *confidence.* The Nurse's blunder for *conference*. Cf. *Merry Wives*, i. 4. 172: "I will tell your worship more of the wart the next time we have confidence." In *Much Ado*, iii. 5. 3, Dog-

berry makes the same blunder. "I would have some confidence with you that decerns you nearly."

135. *indite*, invite. Benvolio possesses some sense of humor.

136. *So ho!* the cry of the sportsman when he starts a hare. So Romeo immediately inquires what game has been found.

151. *"lady, lady, lady."* Mercutio is singing the refrain to *Susanna*, a ballad licensed in 1592. In *Twelfth Night*, ii. 3. 84, Sir Toby sings the first line: "There dwelt a man in Babylon, lady, lady." The full text of the ballad is preserved in Percy's *Reliques*.

153. *saucy merchant,* "impudent fellow; *merchant* is used like *chap*, a shortened form of chapman" (Dowden). Dyce compares *The Fair Maid of Bristow*, (1605): "What [s]ausie merchant have you got there?"

169. *law on my side.* Peter's boldness is on a par with that of Sampson, i. 1. 54, above. It will be noted also that the Nurse gives no vent to her indignation until Mercutio is safely out of hearing.

180. *weak.* Perhaps the Nurse means *wicked*. Collier (MS) so emends the line.

201. *cords made like a tackled stair,* a rope ladder of the kind used on shipboard.

205. *mistress,* a trisyllable. See Appendix D.

220. *with a letter,* with the same letter.

223. *the dog's name.* R, as resembling a growl, was known from ancient times as the dog's letter. It is so called in Ben Jonson's English grammar and in other works, and even gave rise to the verb *arre*, to growl. Having heard something of this, the illiterate Nurse takes as mockery the statement that R stands for Romeo.

226. *rosemary.* Symbolizing remembrance, this flower was much in favor with lovers and at weddings. Cf. *Hamlet*, iv. 5. 175: "There 's rosemary, that 's for remembrance"; and see iv. 5. 79, below, for reference to its use at funerals.

SCENE 5

This scene furthers the action but a very little. Emphasis is on the humorous situation.

1. *struck nine.* Note the carefulness with which the time is marked at many points in the play. It was noon when the Nurse was inquiring for Romeo in the last scene.

7. ***love, i. e.*** Venus.

13–5. A figure borrowed from the game of tennis.

15. The metre is broken here, the sense is seemingly incomplete, and the couplet following certainly looks suspicious. Why should Juliet say *old folks . . . feign as they were dead?* Or why should *lead* be called *pale?* Collier's MS. suggested *old folks seem as dead*, and substituted *dull* for *pale*. White conjectured that *many faine* is a misprint for *marry, fare*. Keightley, though reading *dull* for *pale*, cites Chaucer, *Troilus and Creseide*, ii. : "With asshen pale as lede." Pope omits the entire couplet as interpolated.

18. ***honey nurse.*** Cf. *1 Henry IV*, i. 2. 179 : "my good sweet honey lord."

22. ***them.*** The word *news* in Shakespeare's day was used as either singular or plural.

25. ***give me leave awhile.*** Cf. i. 3. 7, and note. Q 1 reads *let me rest*, which amounts to the same thing.

36. ***stay the circumstance***, wait for the details. Cf. v. 3. 181, below, and *Titus Andronicus*, iv. 2. 156 : "Tell them both the circumstance of all."

44. ***flower of courtesy,*** perfection of courtesy. Cf. ii. 4. 61, above.

50. ***as.*** See Abbott, § 107. "If" is implied.

51. This line is scanned, No. 8, in Appendix D.

56–9. This is sometimes regarded as a rude sort of verse and so printed. Servants and ignorant persons often so speak in Elizabethan dramas.

67. ***coil,*** hubbub, turmoil. So *The Comedy of Errors*, iii. 1. 48 : "What a coil is there, Dromio?"

73. ***straight at any news.*** The meaning is clear enough without resort to the emendations that have been proposed ; as, "straightway at my news" (Hanmer), or "straight at my next news" (Walker). The Nurse makes a general comment on Juliet's habit of blushing on slight provocation.

SCENE 6

A short scene marks the last upward stage of the lovers' fortunes. But the tragic foreshadowing is even more notable here than in previous scenes.

This scene underwent apparently the most thorough revision between the writing of Q 1 and that of Q 2. The readings of Q 1 will be found in Appendix A.

3–8. The suggestion of these lines comes directly from Brooke; see Appendix B.

A similar note is sounded in the conclusion of Browning's *In a Balcony*, where Norbert and Constance are satisfied in the very presence of "love-devouring death" (Mims).

> "*Nor.* This is life's height.
> . . . Men have died
> Trying to find this place, which we have found."

> "We are past harm now.
> . . . This must end here:
> It is too perfect."

9–15. The Friar's calm words suggest a passage in Wordsworth's *Laodamia:*

> "Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
> Rebellious passion: for the gods approve
> The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul;
> A fervent, not ungovernable, love.
> Thy transports moderate."

Some critics find in the Friar's speech the keynote of the entire play, and think that Shakespeare intended it as a moral lesson, a warning against the dangers of violent love and violent hatred. All that we know of the dramatist and the way that he worked, renders such an opinion untenable (Mims).

9. *violent . . . violent.* On the pronunciation see Appendix D.

10. *like fire and powder.* The Friar uses the same simile again in iii. 3. 132, below.

12. *his,* its. The latter word became fixed as the possessive of *it* after the time of Shakespeare. As in the King James version of the Bible, the regular neuter possessive form was *his*, though *it* was occasionally employed. See Abbott, § 228.

13. *confounds*, destroys, ruins. Cf. *confusion* = destruction, in iv. 5. 65, below.

17. Is not the reading of Q 1 better: "So light of foote nere hurts the troden flower"? The idea is a familiar one in poetry; it is found, for example, in Scott's *Lady of the Lake* and Tennyson's *Maud* (Mims).

21. *confessor.* Accented *con'fessor'*; see Appendix D.

25. *that.* For the use of this conjunction where modern English requires the repetition of *it*, cf. Abbott, § 285.

30. *conceit.* See Glossary.

32. Steevens notes the same sentiment repeated in *Antony and Cleopatra*, i. 1. 15: "There 's beggary in the love that can be reckoned."

34. *sum up sum of half my wealth.* The usual quibble. Emendations have often been proposed, but they seem unnecessary. Staunton gives a reasonable interpretation: "I cannot sum up the sum, or total, of half my wealth."

ACT III — SCENE 1

Here the plot reaches a turning-point. The chance meeting on a warm day of Tybalt and Mercutio, hot-headed representatives of the opposing houses, together with Mercutio's misinterpretation of Romeo's attitude, leads to an encounter in which Mercutio is slain. Stung to revenge, Romeo fights and slays Tybalt and is thereupon banished. Thus for the first time the antagonistic forces gain a victory, and the lovers' fortunes begin to decline.

4. *these hot days.* Reed cites Sir Thomas Smith's *Commonwealth of England* (1583): "For in the warme time people for the most part be more unruly."

6. *me*, ethical dative; see note to ii. 4. 22, above.

9. *drawer, i. e.*, the waiter. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 33: "I question my puny drawer."

11. Clarke notes that this quiet retort gives point to the humor of Mercutio's lecturing the staid Benvolio on the sin of quarrelsomeness.

14. *moved to be moody* sounds like an echo of i. 1. 8, above.

15. *what to?* Of course Benvolio is asking what he is moved to, and of course Mercutio's misunderstanding of the last word is deliberate.

32. *tutor me from,* "teach me to avoid" (Rolfe).

41. *gentlemen*, a dissyllable; see Appendix D.

42. It is frequently stated that the part borne by Mercutio in this quarrel, and afterwards his death, are details original with Shakespeare, and are not given in any earlier version of the story. Fuller shows (cf. Appendix C) that in Struijs is a scene closely resembling this, in which Phebidas, who corresponds to Mercutio here, quarrels and fights with Thibout. Romeo comes up and tries

to part them, but at that instant Thibout thrusts at Phebidas and slays him.

45. *occasion,* here almost = cause.

49. *consort.* Mercutio is as usual looking for an opportunity to quibble, and takes this word in the sense of a company of minstrels — a concert.

52. *zounds,* an oath, meaning literally, "By God's wounds."

55. *reason coldly,* speak quietly, without anger.

58. The doubling of the negative, considered incorrect to-day, was long thought to add emphasis to a statement. The personal pronoun is often repeated at the end of a sentence. So *Titus Andronicus,* v. 3. 113: "Alas, you know I am no vaunter, I." *King Lear,* ii. 2. 104: "He cannot flatter, he."

59. *my man.* Tybalt means "the man I am seeking," but Mercutio, quibbling as usual, wilfully takes the phrase in the sense of "my servant," and affirms that Romeo is *man* enough to follow Tybalt to the field for a fight.

62. *hate I bear thee,* still another restoration by Pope from Q 1. Other early editions, followed by some modern, read *love* in place of *hate.*

66. *appertaining rage,* rage appertaining to.

69. *boy,* a contemptuous use. Cf. i. 5. 79 and 85, above, and v. 3. 70, below.

77. *alla stoccata,* another Italian fencing term, meaning a thrust or stab with a rapier, but Mercutio applies the phrase to Tybalt.

carries it away, carries the victory, has the better. We still speak of *carrying* an election.

78. *rat-catcher,* another allusion to his name. Cf. ii. 4. 19, above, and corresponding note, and l. 80, below.

will you walk? Will you come aside with me?

90. *outrage,* a trisyllable. See Appendix D, and cf. note on *entrance,* i. 4. 8, above.

94. *sped,* "dispatched, undone" (Schmidt). So *Merchant of Venice,* ii. 9. 72: "So be gone; you are sped."

95–113. For the reading of corresponding lines in Q 1, see Appendix A, IV.

102. *grave man,* a characteristic jest for the dying Mercutio.

peppered, literally covered "with wounds as thick as the particles of pepper sprinkled on a dish" (Webster). Mercutio means that the one wound that he has received has been just as effective. Cf. 1 *Henry IV,* v. 3. 37: "I have led my ragamuffins where they are peppered."

106. *fights by the book of arithmetic,* "fights by the rules of the teachers of fencing," interprets Dowden, who compares ii. 4. 21–3, above.

109. What is the dramatic irony of this statement?

113. *your houses.* "The ineffectual attempt to repeat his former sentence, 'A plague o' both your houses!' . . . serves exquisitely to indicate the faint speech of the dying man, and poetically to image his failing powers" (Clarke).

114. *ally,* relative; cf. l. 194, below.

118. *kinsman,* the reading of Q 1; many editors prefer the *cousin* of Q 2, F.

122. *aspired,* used transitively, means not "attempted to reach," but "actually reached, attained." Malone quotes Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (1590): "And both our souls aspire celestial thrones."

128. *respective lenity,* considerate gentleness.

129. *conduct.* See Glossary.

139. *amazed,* in a maze, completely bewildered, as frequently in Shakespeare.

141. *fortune's fool.* So the old King in *Lear*, iv. 6. 195, declares himself "the natural fool of fortune." Hotspur in *1 Henry IV*, v. 4. 81, exclaims: "Thought's the slave of life and life's time's fool."

148. *manage,* conduct, course.

154. Lady Capulet is the first to demand revenge.

157 ff. Does Benvolio in this speech tell the whole truth, or is he not endeavoring to smooth over Mercutio's part in the conflict? In general the speech corresponds to that in i. 1. 113 ff. Neither adds much to the play. Note Benvolio's diction, his careful balancing of adjectives and phrases.

158. *spoke him fair,* talked kindly to him. Cf. *2 Henry VI*, iv. 1. 120: "My gracious lord, entreat him, speak him fair."

159. *nice.* See Glossary.

162. *take truce,* "make peace" (Schmidt).

169. *retorts,* hurls back, the literal meaning of the word < Lat. *retorquere*, twist back.

175. *by and by.* Cf. note to ii. 2. 151, above.

194. *My blood,* etc. Mercutio is related to the Prince.

SCENE 2

This scene, rich in its poetry, is closely related to that following, each scene showing from the standpoint of one of the lovers that the events of the day have made the catastrophe inevitable. The chief incident in the plot is the Nurse's suggestion looking toward one more meeting of the lovers.

1 ff. These lines are to be regarded as Juliet's marriage hymn, "differing in nothing from the legitimate epithalamium but as blank verse differs from the rhymed stanza."

1. Malone was the first to notice the close similarity of these opening lines to passages in Barnaby Riche's *Farewell* (1583); and Marlowe's *Edward II* (before 1593). The first reads: "The day to his seeming passed away so slowely that he had thought the stately steedes had bin tired that drawe the chariot of the Sunne, and wished that Phæton had beene there with a whippe." So the second:

> "Gallop apace, bright Phœbus, through the skie,
> And dusky night, in rusty iron car;
> Between you both, shorten the time, I pray,
> That I may see that most desired day."

Even if such imitations were conscious on the part of Shakespeare, he cannot be accused of plagiarism for making use of what he found elsewhere. In his day literary men freely and openly borrowed plots, expressions, and ideas from one another with no thought of wrong-doing.

6. ***runaways' eyes.*** The most difficult passage in the whole play. Q 2, Q 3 read *runnawayes;* Q 4, Q 5, F 1 *run-awayes;* F 2, F 3 *run-awaies;* F 4 *run-aways*, all either singular or plural. The present reading is that of the *Globe Shakespeare*, which takes the first word in the sense of ramblers, or vagabonds, whose eyes, Juliet hopes, will not be able to see Romeo at night. Although this reading is ably supported by Prof. J. W. Hales in *Longman's Magazine*, February, 1892, it has not been adopted by such recent editors of the play as Herford, Dowden, and Neilson. For a full discussion of the whole problem the student is referred to the *Variorum* (Furness) edition of the play, pp. 367–95, and to the authorities just cited.

It may be well here to summarize briefly the theories held by various editors, and supported with great ingenuity. (1) Emenda-

tions have been suggested as follows: *rumour's*, conjectured by Heath, and adopted by Hudson; *unawares*, conjectured by Jackson and adopted by Knight (ed. 1), Collier (ed. 1), and Verplanck; *rude day's*, by Dyce and Chambers; *enemies'*, by Collier (ed. 2), etc., etc. On the other hand are those who keep the reading of Qq and Ff. (2) Some of the latter (Delius, Schmidt, and Daniel) make *runaways* plural, as in the Globe text, followed here. (3) Others, reading *runaway's*, find in it a reference to Cupid, Phaeton, Night, Moon, Day, etc. If this reading be correct, perhaps the allusion to the sun, suggested by Warburton, and followed by Hudson, White, Dowden, and other editors, is the most plausible. Juliet wishes that Phaeton were driving the sun's chariot this day at least, so that he might bring in night immediately. Then with the swiftness of her fancy she sees her wish already accomplished; the sun has actually played the "runaway."

Dowden hesitatingly suggests a new pointing of the lines:

> "Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night!
> — That [=yonder] runaway's eyes may wink — and Romeo,
> Leap to these arms! Untalk'd of and unseen,
> Lovers can see to do their amorous rites. . . ."

Neilson practically adopts this punctuation, reading:

> "Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,
> That runaway's eyes may wink; and, Romeo,
> Leap to these arms! Untalk'd of and unseen
> Lovers can see to do their amorous rites. . . ."

9. Steevens compares here Milton's *Comus:*

> "Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
> By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
> Were in the flat sea sunk."

Professor Wendell adds that the difference between the underlying thought of the two passages is characteristic of the difference between Elizabethans and Puritans.

12. *learn.* See Glossary.

14. *Hood my unmann'd blood.* Terms in falconry are used figuratively. A hawk was *hooded* until let fly at the game and was said to be *unmann'd* when not sufficiently acquainted with her

keeper. When the hood was taken off, she *bated*, or fluttered with her wings. The pun on the third word in this line is obvious.

15. *black mantle.* Cf. Brooke, l. 457, "when on earth the Night her mantle black hath spread." See ii. 2. 75, above.

strange love. Cf. ii. 2. 101. Similarly in *All's Well*, v. 3. 168: "Why do you look so strange upon your wife?"

21–5. The most pronounced conceits in which Juliet indulges are found in this and succeeding passages in this scene.

26. In connection with this whole soliloquy Mrs. Jameson's words should be read, giving, as they do, a woman's impression of Juliet's innate purity of mind. "Let it be remembered that in this speech Juliet is not supposed to be addressing an audience, nor even a confidante; and I confess I have been often shocked at the utter want of taste and refinery in those who, with coarse derision, or in a spirit of prudery, yet more gross and perverse, have dared to comment on this beautiful 'Hymn to the Night,' breathed out by Juliet in the silence and solitude of her chamber. She is thinking aloud; it is the young heart 'triumphing to itself in words.' In the midst of all the vehemence with which she calls upon the night to bring Romeo to her arms, there is something so almost infantine in her perfect simplicity, so playful and fantastic in the imagery and language, that the charm of sentiment and innocence is thrown over the whole."

45. *I*, a play on *aye* and *eye*, both spelled frequently with the single vowel.

47. *death-dealing eye of cockatrice*, a beast seemingly identical with the basilisk, whose power is thus described in Warner's *Albion's England* (1586):

> "Æsculap an herdsman did espie
> That did with easy sight enforce a basilisk to flye
> Albeit naturally that beast doth murther with the eye."

So also *Richard III*, iv. 1. 55–6:

> "A cockatrice hast thou hatch'd to the world,
> Whose unavoided eye is murderous."

53. *God save the mark!* Used similarly after the mention of *wounds*, *1 Henry IV*, i. 3. 56. Professor Kittredge in *Words and their Ways* compares the Latin *absit omen* used by the Romans "when they found it necessary to mention an unlucky or disas-

trous thing. 'God save the mark' is the Nurse's interjection when she describes the wound in Tybalt's breast and touches her own body in significant gesture. Our 'Don't speak of it!' gives vague expression to the same feeling." For *mark* Q 1 reads *sample*.

56. ***gore blood,*** clotted blood, as in the anonymous play of *Selimus* (1595): "Color my strong hands with his gore blood."

swounded, swooned. Compare the vulgar "drownded" of to-day.

57–60. For reading of Q 1 see Appendix A, IV.

64. ***contrary.*** For accentuation see Appendix D.

69. Since Romeo is banished, why does not Juliet go with him? In Brooke's poem this course is suggested by Juliet, but Romeo tells her that if she does go she will undo both of them because her father will certainly pursue and overtake the couple and vent on them his wrath. Shakespeare in condensing the story ignored this incident.

73. Possibly a reference to the serpent in the Garden of Eden, which, according to one popular legend, had the head and face of a beautiful woman. See Skeat's *Complete Works of Chaucer*, vol. v. p. 153, for an interesting note on the subject.

74. ***dragon keep so fair a cave,*** an allusion to the tale familiar in Germanic folklore of a cave filled with treasure and guarded by a dragon. The best-known forms of this tale are in the Middle High German *Niebelungenlied*, and in the hero's last adventure recounted in the Anglo-Saxon poem, *Beowulf*.

75–78. Cf. Romeo's paradoxical language, i. 1. 181 ff.

83–4. ***book . . . So fairly bound.*** We have already noted the same conceit, further elaborated in i. 3. 81 ff.

85–6. Cf. Fletcher, *The Wild-Goose Chase* (c. 1621) ii. 1. 161–2.

> "Is there no faith,
> No troth, nor modesty, in men?"

87. ***naught,*** wicked; cf. *Lear*, ii. 4. 130: "Beloved Regan, thy sister's naught."

The line is scanned, No. 9, in Appendix D.

90. ***Blister'd be thy tongue.*** In Brooke, ll. 1145–6, Juliet after accusing Romeus becomes "wroth with herself," and soliloquizes:

> "Ah cruel murdering tongue, murderer of others' fame,
> How durst thou once attempt to touch the honour of his name?"

Shakespeare, by a characteristic stroke of art, turns her indignation on the Nurse's tongue instead of on her own.

92. Here, as Steevens points out, Shakespeare is possibly indebted to the account in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure:* "Is it possible that under such beautie and rare comelinesse, disloyaltie and treason may have their siedge and lodging?" *Siedge* is an old word for "seat."

98. *poor my lord.* Possessive adjectives, when unemphatic, are sometimes transposed, being really combined with nouns. Cf. Abbott, § 13, and iii. 5. 200, below.

smooth, speak kindly of, flatter. Probably a quibble lies between this word and *mangle*, which sometimes to smooth linen, but here means tear, dismember.

108. *worser.* Cf. note on ii. 3. 29, above.

114. *slain ten thousand Tybalts,* is "worse than the loss of ten thousand Tybalts" (Mason).

114, 116, 117, 118, 121. Note the consistent figure of an army on the march.

120. *modern,* ordinary.

121. *rearward.* Another pun on this and *rear word* is doubtless intended.

142. *my true knight.* Romeus is frequently termed a knight in Brooke.

The Nurse plays the same part for Juliet here that the Friar does for Romeo in the next scene. In this passage she certainly shows good sense and courage.

SCENE 3

The sympathetic Friar suggests a solution of their difficulties which promises ultimate happiness to the lovers, and he also arranges for their farewell meeting. Thus an important purpose of the scene is to add an element of suspense to the plot.

2–3. Even the Friar uses conceits; cf. l. 83, below.

10. *vanish'd,* a very peculiar use of the word, as Keightley points out. He suggests "issued, or some word of similar meaning." Dowden adds: "I suspect that banishment in the next line misled the printer; but possibly (and it is strange that this has not been suggested) Shakespeare wrote, 'A gentler judgment — "banish'd" — from his lips.'" In support of Dowden's first suggestion it may be noted that in the Second Quarto the word *vanisht* is placed exactly above *banish*-ment letter for letter.

12. *banishment.* Romeo rings the changes on this word just as Juliet does in the preceding scene.

26. ***rush'd.*** Capell suggests *push'd* and Collier *brush'd.*

29. Steevens quotes Dryden, *Palamon and Arcite*, for a similar turn:

> "Heaven is not, but where Emily abides,
> And where she 's absent all is hell besides."

33. ***validity,*** value. So *All 's Well that Ends Well*, v. 3. 192:

> "this ring,
> Whose high respect and rich validity
> Did lack a parallel."

34. ***courtship.*** According to Schmidt the two meanings of "courtliness, civility," and "courting, wooing," blend into one here and in *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 364: "an inland man, one that knew courtship too well, for there he fell in love."

38. ***who.*** For this form of the relative used of inanimate persons and objects regarded as persons, where modern English requires *which*, cf. note on i. 1. 119, and see Abbott, § 264.

41. This line, certainly from a poetic standpoint one of the worst in Shakespeare, has given editors much trouble on account of evident confusion in the printing of it and of those that follow in the early editions. Q 2, the authoritative text, reads:

> "This may flyes do, when I from this must flie,
> And sayest thou yet, that exile is not death?
> But Romeo may not, he is banished.
> Flies may do this, but I from this must flie:
> They are freemen, but I am banished."

Q 1 omits ll. 38–39, and runs:

> "And steale immortall kisses from her lips;
> But *Romeo* may not, he is banished.
> Flies may doo this, but I from this must flye."

F 1 arranges the lines:

> "This may Flies doe, when I from this must flie,
> And, saist thou yet, that exile is not death?
> But *Romeo* may not, hee is banished."

The reading of the present text is that first proposed by Steevens and has proved generally acceptable to editors.

45. *mean.* This form is used here for the sake of the pun, but it is found elsewhere in Shakespeare, as in *1 Henry VI*, iii. 2. 10: "Our sacks shall be a mean to sack the city."

54–5. *armour. . . . milk.* The figure changes here; it is not a clear case of mixed metaphor.

55. Malone compares a passage from Lyly's *Euphues* (1580), a book which every educated Elizabethan read: "Thou sayest banishment is better to the freeborne. There be many meates which are sowre in the mouth and sweet in the maw; but if thou mingle them with sweet sawces, they yeeld both a pleasant taste and wholesome nourishment. I speake this to this end; that though thy exile seems grievous to thee, yet, guiding thyselfe with the rules of philosophy, it shall be more tolerable." The same thought is in the familiar words of *As You Like It*, ii. 1. 12: "Sweet are the uses of adversity."

60. *prevails,* avails, as in *Henry V*, iii. 2. 16: "If wishes would prevail with me, My purpose should not fail with me."

63. *dispute,* reason, discuss; as in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 1. 69: "Thou disputest like an infant."

71 ff. No such dialogue is found in Painter or Brooke, but Fuller shows that it is fairly close to that of Struijs in the corresponding scene. Fuller translates:

"*Fr. L.* My son keep to thy senses . . . Truly thy grief exceeds all bounds. Methinks I hear some one. Still! I will go first and see who it is, that thou mayst not be betrayed; and so it be not a trusty friend, he shall remain outside. Ha! 't is the nurse. Now I may open the door.

"(*Enter* Nurse.)

"*Romeo.* My heart is comforted. What may she bring? Welcome, nurse; how is it with my Juliette? What tidings bringest thou me?

"*Nurse.* Alas! Romeo, thy mistress lies for thy sake in extreme grief; she sighs the whole day long, and cannot sleep an hour of the night — so presses her her sorrow. My heart breaks to hear her moan and sob in the bitterest of the night. Thy absence, my lord, makes her often call for death."

85–6. *O woeful sympathy! Piteous predicament!* In all the early editions these words are included as here in the Nurse's speech. Most modern editors follow Farmer and Steevens in transferring them to the Friar, on the ground that it is out of character for the ignorant nurse to use such language. But Delius, Daniel,

and Neilson, as well as the Cambridge editors, preserve the earlier reading.

90. *an O,* an affliction, expressed by the use of that interjection.

94. *old,* practised; as in our expression, "old reprobate."

98. *conceal'd.* The fact that Juliet is his lady is concealed from the world. The word was pronounced much like *cancell'd* in the same line, producing a pun.

103. *level,* aim, range; cf. Portia's "level at my affection," *Merchant of Venice,* i. 2. 41.

106. *anatomy,* body, as in *King John,* iii. 4. 40: "That fell anatomy, Which cannot hear."

109. In this speech Shakespeare is closely following Brooke. For the antithesis between *man* and *beast,* cf. *Macbeth,* i. 7. 46 ff.

119. Again the dramatist seems to have made an unimportant slip in transferring some of the details of the story to the stage. Romeo has not been railing on his birth here, but in Brooke's poem he does so rail.

126. *form of wax.* The disparagement implied in the Friar's use of this phrase raises the question whether the Nurse's reference to Paris in i. 3. 76, as *a man of wax,* may have a similar turn. But the Nurse probably does not so intend, for she is all admiration of Paris's person.

127. *digressing.* See Glossary.

132. Steevens notes that English soldiers using matchlocks had to carry lighted matches near the wooden flasks in which was their powder.

134. "And thou torn to pieces with thine own weapons" (Johnson).

151. *blaze,* publish, make known < Old Norse *blāsa,* blow. Cf. *blazon,* in ii. 6. 26, above, = proclaim.

159. This characteristic remark of the old Nurse affords a much-desired comic relief.

SCENE 4

The counterplot now develops a new and impossible complication, a second marriage of Juliet following the first. The complete entanglement lies in the fact that Romeo's killing of Tybalt makes likewise impossible the alternative course, the announcement of the first marriage.

4. *born to die,* a commonplace already uttered by the Nurse in iii. 3. 92, above. Capulet's grief is not profound.

8. ***woe . . . woo.*** Note the quibble.

11. ***mew'd up,*** confined, shut up; cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, i. 1. 188: "And therefore has he closely mew'd her up." The word comes from the Latin *mutare*, change, through the French. Used first to indicate the change by moulting of a bird's feathers, it developed the sense here because moulting hawks were caged.

12. ***desperate tender,*** bold offer. Steevens cites *The Weakest Goeth to the Wall* (1600): "Witness this desperate tender of mine honor."

23. ***keep no great ado,*** as we colloquially say, "make no great fuss.

32. ***against.*** See Glossary.

34. ***Afore me,*** originally perhaps, as Dyce explains, *God before me*, *i. e.*, in the presence of God. Some critics explain the words as an address to the torch-bearer to carry the light before Capulet to the chamber, but this is unlikely.

35. ***by and by.*** Cf. note on ii. 2. 151, above.

41–64. For reading of Q 1 see Appendix A, IV.

SCENE 5

The decline of the lovers' fortunes is now accelerated. First with retarded movement, in lines full of foreboding, Romeo leaves Juliet for Mantua. Then the storm breaks. In quick succession come Lady Capulet's formal announcement of the plan for Juliet's wedding to Paris, the daughter's flat refusal, old Capulet's frenzy on hearing this news, his coarse taunts, and threats of death unless his will be observed. Next, Juliet's pathetic appeal to her mother meets with a cold response, and even the Nurse's counsel is deliberately wicked. Desperate, Juliet cuts loose from them all, resolved on going to the Friar and ready for suicide if he cannot help.

Capulet's Orchard. There is much diversity of opinion as to the setting here, and some editors would divide the scene after l. 59. The chief difficulty with this arrangement is that Juliet stays on the stage the whole time. It is probable that in Elizabethan playhouses all the action, except Romeo's descent to the ground, took place above the main floor on the balcony at the back of the stage. This balcony was supposed to represent Juliet's chamber.

1. Fuller sees here again the influence of the English play followed by Struijs. In the Dutch version Romeo declares that it is four o'clock and he has to depart. His wife expresses surprise to

hear that it is so late, and later utters the fear that they shall nevermore meet. Romeo calms her fears and climbs down.

4. ***yon pomegranate.*** Note the realistic effect of the adjective. The pomegranate tree appears to be the favorite haunt of the nightingale in many lands.

8. ***lace,*** "to diversify with streaks of color" (*N. E. Dict*). Cf. *Macbeth*, ii. 3. 118: "His silver'd skin laced with his golden blood."

9. Cf. *Sonnets*, xxi. 12: "Those gold candles fix'd in heaven's air." For other dawn pictures in Shakespeare, see note on ii. 3. 1–6, above.

12. ***I know it, I.*** See note on iii. 1. 58, above.

13. ***exhales.*** According to popular scientific notions at the time meteors were composed of vapors drawn up by the sun. Many lines in Shakespeare illustrate this belief, as *Julius Cæsar*, ii. 1. 44:

> "The exhalations whizzing in the air
> Give so much light that I may read by them."

19. ***morning's eye.*** Cf. Milton's *Lycidas:* "under the opening eyelids of the morn."

20. ***reflex,*** reflection. The moon shining on the clouds is reflected therefrom. *Brow* is used for face, but some editors change the word to *bow*, and understand it as referring to the segment of the new moon.

21. ***Nor . . . not.*** For the double negative see note on iii. 1. 58, above.

21–2. Other passages in which Shakespeare refers to the lark are *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 2. 914; *Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 1. 184, iii. 1. 133, iv. 1. 98; *Merchant of Venice*, v. 1. 102; *Taming of the Shrew*, iv. 3. 177; *Cymbeline*, ii. 3. 21; *Richard II*, iii. 3. 183; *Winter's Tale*, iv. 3. 9; *All's Well*, ii. 5. 7; *Troilus and Cressida*, iv. 2. 9.

26. Juliet strives to detain her husband, but when she finds him yielding to her persuasions and thereby imperilling his life, she immediately changes her tone and thinks only of his safety. She has shown the same unselfishness in ii. 2. 64, above.

28. ***unpleasing sharps,*** acute and shrill sounds (Schmidt).

29. ***division,*** a quadrisyllable. The meaning is thus given in *N. E. Dict.*: "The execution of a rapid melodic passage, originally conceived as the dividing of each of a succession of long notes into several short ones." Cf. Heywood, *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (acted 1603), v. 2. 13–15:

"Her lute! Oh, God! Upon this instrument
Her fingers have rung quick division
Sweeter than that which now divides our hearts."

31. An old saying due to the fact that the (English) lark has ugly eyes, and the toad, beautiful. If they had only changed voices too, Juliet says, there would be no need to heed the summons.

34. *hunt's-up.* "Originally 'the hunt is up,' name of an old song and its tune, sung or played to awaken huntsmen in the morning; . . . hence . . . an early morning song" (*N. E. Dict.*). It is used particularly of a "song for a new-married wife, the day after the marriage," as Cotgrave informs us. Technically, such a song is called an aubade.

43. Some editors prefer the reading of Q 1: "my Lord, my Love, my Frend." The text here is practically that of other Qq and F. It must be remembered that *friend* in Elizabethan English bore a much warmer connotation than it bears at present. Dowden points out that in the corresponding passage in Brooke *friend* and *friendship* occur where we should speak of *lover* and *love.*

51 7. The presentiment of coming evil, which we have noted in several scenes before, here assumes more definite shape. But Romeo, who in the last scene was in the depths of despair, has taken on new hope, and is sure that all will be well with them. Henceforth his courage never falters.

52 3. Possibly an echo of the familiar line from Vergil, *Æneid*, i. 203: "forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit."

59. *Dry sorrow drinks our blood.* Dry = thirsty. "The belief that grieving exhausts the blood and impairs the health, is more than once alluded to by Shakespeare" (Clarke). Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2. 97: "sighs of love that costs the fresh blood dear."

67. *down, i. e.*, downstairs, with a quibble on *up.*

68. *procures,* brings; cf. ii. 2. 145, above, where the verb means "cause to come."

71. Cf. Juliet's words, iii. 2. 130, above: "Wash they his wound with tears."

75. *feeling,* affecting, heartfelt.

78. *cannot choose but.* To Elizabethans this phrase meant scarcely more than "must necessarily." Cf. *2 Henry IV*, iii. 2. 220–1: "Nay, she must be old; she cannot choose but be old."

82. *be,* a frequent use; there is no need to adopt *are*, the reading of Q 1. Abbott, § 300.

84. ***like he.*** For the nominative form, cf. Abbott, § 206.

89–92. Compare Lady Capulet's cry for immediate revenge of the death of Tybalt, iii. 1. 154, above.

91. ***shall give.*** The relative is omitted, as frequently in Shakespeare. Cf. Abbott, § 244.

97–100. Dr. Johnson, the stern moralist, declares that "Juliet's equivocations are rather too artful for a mind disturbed by the loss of a new lover." Clarke replies that they are "exactly the sort of shifts and quibbles that a nature rendered timid by stinted intercourse with her kind, and by communion limited to the innocent confidences made by one of her age in the confessional, is apt to resort to, when first left to itself in difficulties of situation and abrupt encounter with life's perplexities." Besides, it has been pointed out "that this is a typical Elizabethan quibbling passage, and that Shakespeare has brought this about in an artificial way so that Juliet is forced to quibble. Such quibbles as she uses are perfectly nugatory as to her character. She quibbles chiefly for the amusement of the audience."

Absolute frankness does not guide Juliet in all her conversations with her mother, her father, the Nurse, or Count Paris. But there are good reasons for her lack of confidence in each of them.

99. ***That,*** so that. Abbott, § 283.

106. ***needy,*** needful, necessary.

107. ***they.*** *Tidings*, like news, is either singular or plural in Shakespeare. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 14. 112: "This sword but shown to Cæsar with this tidings;" and the same play, ii. 5. 87: "Let ill tidings tell Themselves when they be felt."

110. ***sorted out,*** contrived, brought about.

112. ***in happy time.*** This day of joy comes appropriately, just at the right time. The thought is the same as in l. 106.

119. Juliet's irony is adapted from Brooke, ll. 1905–6:

> "Madam, I marvel much that you so lavas [*i. e.* wasteful] are
> Of me your child."

122. ***I swear.*** Some editors, probably wishing to save Juliet from using an oath here, follow Q 1 in omitting this expression. But just six lines above the girl has sworn "by Saint Peter's church, and Peter too." She is greatly stirred with indignation, and in no mood to employ soft language or show timidity. See Appendix D for other examples of alexandrines.

127. ***the air***, the reading of Qq 4, 5, adopted by most editors, though Malone prefers *the earth* of Q 2, F.

130. ***conduit.*** Brooke apparently has a particular fondness for this figure. See Appendix B for instances of its use.

Malone notes that "conduits in the form of human figures were common in Shakespeare's time."

127–31. Note quibbles on *sun, sunset, son, dew, rain, showering.*

131–8. Another series of conceits not appreciated by modern readers.

136. ***Who.*** Cf. note to i. 1. 119, above.

142. ***take me with you,*** let me catch your meaning. Cf. Falstaff's exquisite rejoinder to the Prince's description of him, *1 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 506: "I would your grace would take me with you: whom means your grace?"

Capulet's outrageous language to his daughter should be compared with King Lear's to Cordelia, *Lear*, i. 1. 110 ff. Neither father is willing to believe that his child will not accede to any of his desires. When an unreasonable request is refused, each parent breaks into an ungovernable storm of wrath, which raises the protest of a subordinate. Even closer parallels to the language of Capulet will be found in that of the Lord Mayor to his daughter Rose in Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (1599), iii. 3 ff.

145. ***wrought,*** succeeded in winning, effected.

156. ***hurdle,*** a sledge to drag criminals to execution. *N. E. Dict.* cites Dickens, *Tale of Two Cities:* "He 'll be drawn on a hurdle to be half hanged."

158. ***tallow-face.*** Romeo in l. 59 has remarked on the girl's paleness, ascribing it to "dry sorrow." Old Capulet, now thoroughly angry, hints a less delicate cause.

166. ***lent.*** Q 1 has *sent*, which many editors adopt. The use of *lent* in this sense is well established. In Brooke, l. 1795, Lady Capulet says of Tybalt, "God hath claimed the life that was but lent." So the pre-Shakespearian *King Leir* (published 1605), 43–4:

> "My gracious Lord, I hartily do wish,
> That God had lent you an heyre indubitate."

This, it will be noticed, does not refer to one who has died, but, as in the text, to a non-existent child. Moreover, a recent newspaper item from London reports "a curious variation from the usual birth notice" in Surrey, reading "the loan of a son," whose name follows. The item continues, "A similar idea is to be found in an epitaph in Kingsbridge church yard in Devon. It runs: 'My parents dear, do not lament. I was not given, but only lent.'"

172. ***smatter,*** prate, prattle. Dowden cites Heywood, *The*

Pardoner and the Friar: "What, standest thou there all the day smattering!"

173. ***God ye god-den.*** See note on i. 2. 58, above. Of course Capulet is ironical in this speech, and he probably bows as he utters it, precisely as Mercutio has mocked the Nurse in ii. 4. 116.

178. The line is scanned, No. 10, in Appendix D.

183. Rolfe compares *Much Ado*, i. 1. 56–7, "stuffed with all honourable virtues."

186. ***in her fortune's tender***, when fortune is offered to her.

192. Cf. Brooke, l. 1983, "Advise thee well, and say that thou art warnéd now." ***advise*** = reflect, consider.

198–9. Cf. the wretched king's appeal, *Lear*, ii. 4. 192 ff.:

> "O, heavens,
> If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
> Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
> Make it your cause; send down and take my part!"

200. ***sweet my mother.*** Compare note to iii. 2. 98, above.

206. With what infinite pathos the helpless girl now turns to the Nurse after being repelled alike by her raging father and hard-hearted mother!

214 ff. Shakespeare is again following Brooke or the old play. In both Struijs and Brooke such a conversation occurs, but it is later in the story.

222. ***green.*** Green eyes were then looked on with great favor. Dowden cites *Two Noble Kinsmen*, v. 1: "Thy rare green eye."

229. ***Amen!*** The girl is really putting a period to the curse that the Nurse has just pronounced on her heart and soul. It is a heartfelt expression of her abhorrence of the wickedness now revealed.

234. Q 1 has a significant stage-direction here. As the Nurse withdraws, Juliet "lookes after" her. In her amazement at the woman's perfidy, the young wife watches her until she is out of sight.

ACT IV — SCENE 1

Act iv. is devoted to Juliet's struggles against the antagonistic forces, her endeavor by means of a desperate expedient to escape the destruction that threatens her. This secures for the audience a brief lightening of the tension in the hope that the catastrophe may yet be averted. In Scene 1 Juliet throws Paris off his guard,

then learns from the Friar of his dangerous remedy, and immediately agrees to try it.

3. This line has given editors much unnecessary trouble. The meaning is obviously, to use Dr. Johnson's paraphrase, "His haste shall not be abated by my slowness." According to modern standards the words would mean the reverse; but *to slack* may be taken in the sense, "that I should slack," "in order to slack."

5. ***uneven,*** "indirect, not straightforward" (Dowden). *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 298: "Be even and direct with me," shows the contrary term.

11. ***marriage,*** a trisyllable; see Appendix D.

18–36. Rolfe thinks that "this part of the scene evidently came from the first draft of the play." Not necessarily; it is the sort of "give and take" dialogue that is frequent throughout the Elizabethan drama, and Juliet's assumed lightness at first makes more effective her declaration of despair on the moment of Paris's departure.

21. ***What must be shall be,*** Italian "*che sera sera* (*sarà*)," quoted by Marlowe and translated. The sentiment is common with Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

29. ***abused,*** disfigured, defaced; < Lat. *abutor*, *abusus*, < *ab*, away from, + *utor*, use.

38. ***evening mass.*** The term has called forth from several editors' comment on Shakespeare's "error" as to Roman Catholic usages, but the dramatist is right. Bowdon's *Religion of Shakespeare* (1899) shows "that *mass* was used of various church offices: that in the stricter sense of mass there was great latitude in ancient times as to the hour; that Pius V. (1566–72) prohibited evening masses; that the new law was slow in coming into operation in Germany, and perhaps in England; finally, that in Verona the forbidden custom lingered to the nineteenth century" (Dowden).

41. ***shield,*** avert, forbid, as in *All's Well*, i. 3. 174: "God shield you mean it not."

devotion, a quadrisyllable. See Appendix D, and cf. iii. 5. 29, ***division.***

44–5. It is worthy of note that in this outburst of Juliet's deep anguish every word is a simple monosyllable.

54. ***this knife.*** It seems to have been a custom for ladies of that day to wear knives at their girdles with which to cut meat at dinner.

57. ***label.*** To deeds in Elizabethan times labels, not stamps, were affixed. These labels were the strips of ribbon or parchment to which seals were attached.

62. *extremes,* extreme hardships or sufferings.

62 ff. This knife shall determine the issue between me and my sufferings. In Brooke Juliet tells her mother that rather than marry Paris she will pierce her breast with "bloody knife."

64. *commission,* authority.

78. *yonder tower.* Again a restoration by Pope from Q 1. Ulrici adopts and defends the reading of Qq, Ff. "any tower," as more natural and more vigorous. The reading of the text is dramatically much more effective. Cf. note to iii. 5. 4, above.

79. *thievish ways, i. e.* roads or paths frequented by thieves.

89–120. Shakespeare again closely follows Brooke. See Appendix B, 1.

105. *two and forty hours.* Shakespeare here departs from his source, probably, as Dowden suggests, in order to give "an air of precision and verisimilitude to the Friar's arrangement." Since no amount of arithmetic will make these figures accord exactly with the situation in the final act, several emendations have been proposed here. Editors sometimes forget that these plays were written for the stage, and that audiences in Shakespeare's day were not accustomed to figure out time analyses in their notebooks.

109. *as the manner of our country is.* The explanatory clause is put in for the benefit of the English audience. Shakespeare found this Italian custom particulary alluded to in Brooke. It is also referred to in Coryat's *Crudities* (1776), ii. 27.

114. *drift,* scheme, design; literally, driving, < M. E. *drift,* verbal abstract < A. S. *drīfan,* drive. Cf. ii. 3. 55, above.

119. *no inconstant toy.* No light whim, caprice. Cf. Brooke, ll. 2189–90:

> "God grant he so confirm in thee thy present will,
> That no inconstant toy thee let thy promise to fulfil."

122. *get you gone.* Reflexive use of the verb. Abbott, § 296.

SCENE 2

In this scene, while the hostile forces are apparently triumphant, we find Juliet, in obedience to the counsel of the Friar, again deceiving them with pretended submission.

2. *twenty cunning cooks.* Capulet has evidently forgotten his intention not to "revel much" on account of Tybalt's death.

6. ***an ill cook***, etc., a proverbial expression occurring also in Puttenham's *Art of English Poesie* (1589): "A bad cook that cannot his own fingers lick."

14. ***peevish self-will'd harlotry.*** Cf. *1 Henry IV*, iii. 1. 198, where Glendower, who really loves his daughter, says that she is "a peevish self-will'd harlotry, one that no persuasion can do good upon."

26. ***becomed***, becoming. For this frequent Elizabethan idiom, cf. Abbott, §§ 294, 374.

31. Brooke, ll. 2249–50:

> "In all our commonweal scarce one is to be found
> But is for some good turn, unto this holy father bound."

33. ***closet***, chamber, private room.

39. ***near night***, a deft touch by the dramatist looking forward to the next scene, and giving point to Lady Capulet's housewifely concern. It troubles some critics that it should be just after daybreak when Juliet departs for the Friar's cell, but near night when she returns. An Elizabethan audience would not have demanded a foolishly close attention to consistency in such details.

SCENE 3

Here the desperate remedy proposed by the Friar is finally put to the test. After playing her part with her mother and the Nurse, as in Scene 1 with Paris, and in Scene 2 with her father, Juliet by the supreme effort of her life dares even the tomb for the sake of her husband. The fact that her actual awakening in Act v. is dramatically foreshadowed intensifies the horror.

1. ***ay.*** Evidently in answer to a question of the Nurse as to the garments she wished to put on for her wedding day. How closely Shakespeare follows Brooke throughout this scene will appear by comparison with the summary of the poem, Appendix B, 1.

2. ***leave me to myself.*** Juliet is following out the Friar's instructions, iv. 1. 91, above. The Nurse is in the habit of sleeping in Juliet's chamber.

5. ***cross***, perverse; not "ill-tempered."

12. ***this so sudden business.*** The irony in the phrase should not be overlooked.

19. ***must act alone.*** Here is the pathos of the whole situation.

The young girl who so desires counsel and sympathy is cut off from help in every direction.

20. ***Come, vial.*** Note the metrical pause after these words.

23. ***this shall forbid it.*** See note on iv. 1. 54, above.

24–58. The reading of these lines in Q 1 will be found in Appendix A, IV.

29. Cf. line 270 of the final scene, "We still have known thee for a holy man."

39. ***As, i. e.*** "as, for example." Cf. *Hamlet*, i. 4. 25: "As, in their birth."

receptacle. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, i. 1. 92: "O sacred réceptacle of my joys."

42. ***green, i. e.*** fresh; cf. *Sonnets*. lxiii. 13–4:

> "His beauty shall in these black lines be seen,
> And they shall live, and he in them still green."

47. ***mandrakes.*** On account of the resemblance of the mandrake, or mandragora, root and the human figure, and perhaps also on account of the first syllable of its name, it was popularly supposed to be engendered by dead criminals. When the root was torn from the ground, it is said to utter such shrieks that those hearing it went mad or died. Steevens collected a number of literary allusions to this belief, to which Shakespeare again refers in *2 Henry VI*, iii. 2. 310: "Would curses kill, as doth the mandrake's groan."

57. ***stay*** = stop, don't follow Romeo.

58. ***within the curtains.*** This stage direction is taken from Q 1. The *curtains* fell from the raised stage, or balcony, and were used, when necessary, to shut off that portion underneath. Juliet falls upon her bed, the curtains close in front of her, and the action then goes forward in the *Hall* in front.

SCENE 4

2. ***pastry*** here means place where pastry is prepared, pantry, larder.

4. ***curfew.*** Originally applied only to the evening bell, the term came to include other ringings.

't is three o'clock. Still another marking of the time, but note that several hours seem to pass within a few minutes, for at the close it is day and time to waken Juliet. Q 1 reads *foure a clocke.*

N. E. Dict. quotes the Liverpool Municipal Records of 1673 and 1704 to show that the curfew was there rung at four o'clock.

5. *baked meats*, pies, pastry; particularly applied to meat pies. *Angelica*, probably the name of Lady Capulet, as the remark would be addressed to her rather than to the Nurse.

6. *Spare not for cost.* This is the same Capulet who in the last scene would fain hire twenty cunning cooks, and who in i. 5 refuses to harm even his bitter enemies, so long as they are his guests. Shakespeare got the hint from Brooke, who tells us, l. 158, that Capel "spar'th for no cost" in his banquet.

6–8. *Go, you cot-quean*, etc. Some editors assign this speech to Lady Capulet, thinking it too bold for the Nurse to utter. But the latter is allowed exceptional liberties with her tongue, and usually takes advantage of them. Mark her plain language to Capulet, iii. 5. 169 ff.

11. *mouse-hunt.* See Glossary.

26. *the bridegroom he is come.* For the redundant pronoun, cf. Abbott, § 243.

SCENE 5

This scene shows the apparent success of the Friar's plan and the defeat of the counterplot, leaving the audience in hopes that the story may yet end happily. Hence the tone of farce in the grief-making, and the comic interlude at the close of the scene are dramatically effective.

1. The line is scanned, No. 11, in Appendix D.

12. *down, i.e.* in bed.

25 ff. The directness and evident restraint of this speech indicate Capulet's genuine affection for his child. If we are to judge from his speeches here, his grief is more sincere than that of any one else present.

32. *will not let me speak.* Malone quotes from Brooke the statement that Capulet was so grief-stricken that he had no power to weep "ne yet to speak," and adds that Shakespeare was here following the poem closely, "without recollecting that he had made Capulet in this scene clamorous in his grief." The latter assertion may be doubted. As Rolfe suggests, it would be perfectly natural for the old man to make this speech and afterwards become "clamorous in his grief." Consistency is not one of Capulet's virtues.

40. *living*, property, possessions; as in *Winter's Tale*, iv. 3. 104, "where my land and living lies."

41. ***I thought long to see,*** it seemed to me a long time until I could see. Brooke, l. 2274, tells us that Paris's "longing heart thinks long for their appointed hour." The phrase is common, occurring again in at least two anonymous plays which Shakespeare knew. In *The Troublesome Reign of King John*, Part II, we have:

> "The nobles, commons, clergie, all estates . . .
> Thinke longe to see their new elected king."

Again in the older *King Leir*, l. 499, Ragan says of her betrothed, "Well, I thinke long untill I see my Morgan."

48. ***catch'd.*** An unusual form found again in *Coriolanus*, i. 3. 68.

49 ff. Perhaps, as R. G. White suggests, Shakespeare is here ridiculing the style of the 1581 translation of Seneca's *Tragedies*. Dowden compares the Pyramus and Thisbe play in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Much Elizabethan poetry is of this same florid style.

56. ***detestable.*** For accent see Appendix D, and cf. v. 3. 45, below.

60. ***Uncomfortable,*** affording no comfort, joyless.

65. ***confusion's,*** ruin's, destruction's; quibbling with *confusions*, below, which has the modern sense. Cf. *confounds* in ii. 6. 13, above.

The Friar proves a good actor here. Nothing in his behavior indicates his knowledge that Juliet is not really dead.

70. ***his,*** its, as in ii. 6. 12, above.

72. ***advanced,*** exalted, as in v. 3. 96, below, with a play on the usual sense of the word.

76. ***she is well,*** a phrase often used as a euphemism for death. Cf. v. 1. 17, below.

79. ***rosemary.*** See note on ii. 4. 226, above. Several editors cite Dekker, *Wonderful Year* (*Works*, ed. Grosart, i. 129): "The rosemary that was washt in sweete water to set out the Bridall is now wet in teares to furnish her buriall."

80. ***as the custom is.*** See note on iv. 1. 109, above.

84. The corresponding passage in Brooke is quoted, Appendix B.

99. ***case.*** The Nurse of course uses the word in the common sense of "state of affairs," but the musician quibbles, applying it to the cover for his instrument.

101. ***Enter Peter.*** From two of the Quartos we learn that Will Kemp, the famous comedian, who belonged to Shakespeare's com-

pany of actors, played the part of Peter, for they read here, "*Enter* Will Kemp." This portion of the scene was probably written particularly for him. Some time has to elapse between Juliet's supposed death and the announcement of the fact to Romeo in the next scene. In the interim Kemp may well entertain the audience after the manner of the gravedigger in *Hamlet*, v. 1, and the drunken porter in *Macbeth*, ii. 3. Were Juliet really dead, this unseemly mirth in her home might shock our sense of decency.

103. ***"Heart's ease,"*** the name of a popular tune mentioned in Rychardes's *Misogonus* (*circa* 1560). The music is to be found in Naylor's *Shakespeare and Music*, p. 193.

107. Steevens points out that the burden of the first stanza of "A Pleasant New Ballad of Two Lovers," which was reprinted in the *Shakespeare Society Papers*, i. 12, is "Hey ho! my heart is full of woe."

107–8. ***merry dump.*** Peter gets his terms mixed, as *dump* means a doleful strain.

115. "To give ***the gleek***" was to scoff, to mock. Perhaps there was in the term *minstrel* some contemptuous connotation not now present.

117–8. ***serving-creature,*** *i. e.* retort by calling you a serving-creature, which seems to have been another insulting term.

120. ***carry no crotchets***, put up with none of your whims. A quibble is here, *crotchets* meaning "musical characters," as well as "caprices."

121. ***re you . . . fa you.*** Ulrici suggests more quibbles. *Ray* meant to *befoul*, and *fay* to *cleanse*. Peter might do both with a "dry-beating."

125. ***have at you.*** "Peter takes *put out* not as meant, *i. e.* extinguish, but as the opposite of *put up* (your dagger), and so draw, unsheathe" (Dowden).

128. ***When griping grief,*** etc. The entire poem quoted here may be found in Percy's *Reliques*, Series I, Book 2, under the title, "A Song to the Lute in Musicke." It was written by Richard Edwards, and published in the *Paradyse of Daynty Devises* (1576), a famous Elizabethan anthology.

132. ***Simon Catling.*** The surname, like those of *Rebeck* and *Soundpost*, below, indicates the profession. Catling is "a small lute-string made of catgut"; and rebeck, "an instrument of three strings" (Steevens). Cf. Milton's *L'Allegro:* "And the jocund rebecks sound."

135. ***Pretty!*** Peter is patronizing the musicians for their answers to his riddle. Pope restored the word from Q 1, in place of *Prates*, as in Q 2, and *Pratest* in Q 3, F. A similar replacement occurred in l. 138, below. Few editors reject Pope's reading.

147. ***pestilent***, pestering, plaguy.

ACT V — SCENE 1

Neither Paris nor the Capulets, whom Juliet has so outwitted, prove to be the lovers' most formidable foes, but it is now seen that they are fighting against their own evil fate, or the stars, as already hinted several times in the play. Here a mistaken report of Juliet's death hurries Romeo on to the catastrophe.

1. The meaning is, If I may trust that creation of sleep, *i. e.* my dream, "which bears the flattering semblance of truth." Q 1 reads "eye" of sleep, which many editors prefer. "Ruth," "sooth," "death," and other unnecessary substitutes for *truth* have been suggested.

3. ***bosom's lord***, heart. Steevens notes that in Chester's *Love's Martyr* (1601), the phrase occurs and is marginally explained as Cupid.

4. ***an unaccustom'd spirit.*** It is unusual for Romeo to be so cheerful that he can interpret an evil dream as presaging good. His cheerfulness began, we remember, the morning of his departure from Juliet, when he endeavored to calm her presentiments.

Munro, following Skeat, compares with this passage a famous one in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, v. 1164 ff. There Troilus, like Romeo, separated from his love, and about to receive evil news of her, says:

> "But hardely, it is not al for nought
> That in myn herte I now reioyse thus.
> It is ayein som good I have a thought.
> Noot I not how, but sin that I was wrought
> Ne felte I swich a confort, dar I seye;
> She comth to-night, my lyf, that dorste I leye!"

In each case the story gains dramatically by the strong contrast between what the hero expects to hear and what he really hears about his loved one.

8. Steevens compares Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* (published 1598): "He kissed her and breathed life into her lips." The figure may easily have occurred to the two writers independently, but Shakespeare may have known the poem in manuscript, as Marlowe died in 1593. The poem is quoted in *As You Like It*, iii. 5. 82, and referred to, *ibid.*, iv. 1. 100–6.

10. *Ah me!* This may be, as Rolfe implies, only another instance of the lover's sigh. Cf. i. 1. 167; ii. 1. 10; ii. 2. 25, and iii. 2. 36, above.

11. *booted,* to indicate that he had come on horseback.

17. *is well.* Cf. note on iv. 5. 76, above.

18. *Capels',* another form of Capulets' which Shakespeare found also in Brooke.

21. *presently.* See Glossary; cf. *present*, l. 51, below.

22. *pardon me,* an allusion to the ancient custom of punishing the bringer of evil tidings, occasionally by death, while the messenger of good was rewarded. Balthasar seems almost to deserve severe punishment for the promptness and bluntness with which he delivers the false news.

these ill news. See note on ii. 5. 22.

24. Note the simplicity of the words, yet, as Clarke says: "There is a terribly quiet depth of concentrated anguish and will in this brief despairing ejaculation of Romeo's that is more expressive than a hundred raving lines of lament would be." According to Fuller, in Struijs Romeo does rave at some length: "Is my mistress dead? Is it true? How comes it then that Phoebus still shines on? Or can he still without flickering cast his gaze upon the earth?" And this vein continues for several lines more.

27. *patience,* a trisyllable.

36. *in,* into; cf. Abbott, § 159.

39. *weeds,* clothing, garments; "widows' weeds" illustrates the term.

overwhelming, overhanging.

45 ff. This description was suggested by Brooke, though the concrete details are Shakespeare's. See Appendix B.

60. *Gear* = stuff. The language is close to Brooke's.

61. Cf. Lyly, *Euphues* (*Works*, ed. Bond, p. 218): "One droppe of poyson disperseth it selfe into everye vaine."

67. *any he,* any man; a frequent Elizabethan usage. Cf. Abbott, § 224.

utters, puts into circulation, trades in. *The Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 330, says that money "doth utter" ware.

68. ***bare,*** poor, lean; Falstaff's men in *1 Henry IV*, iv. 2. 75, are said to be "poor and bare."

77 ff. Steevens thought that perhaps Shakespeare in this speech "had not quite forgotten" Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale*, in which an apothecary speaks similarly of the "violent" poison which he is selling. This suggestion is confirmed by Romeo's reply, which contains the very moral enforced and reiterated by Chaucer throughout the tale.

SCENE 2

looks backward to Scene 1, explaining why the true account of Juliet did not reach Romeo, and forward to Scene 3, suggesting that the Friar may yet be in time to avert the catastrophe.

5. ***bare-foot brother.*** Dowden notes that this information is gleaned from Brooke, but that the poem places the pestilence at Mantua. See Appendix B, 1.

16. ***infection,*** a quadrisyllable; see Appendix D.

18. ***nice.*** For the meaning of this word see Glossary.

charge, weight, importance.

19. ***dear,*** *i. e.* of great importance.

21. ***crow,*** crow-bar. *The Comedy of Errors*, iii. 1. 80: "Go borrow me a crow."

SCENE 3

Seemingly Fortune, or, as Romeo believes, their evil star, determines the fate of the lovers. Had Juliet's sleeping potion lost its effect a half-hour earlier, had the Friar arrived at the tomb a few moments sooner, the lives of both lovers would have been saved. Even Paris, by chance meeting Romeo at the grave, is involved in their common fate. But only a sacrifice like this could mitigate the long-standing hatred between the families. Such is the dramatic explanation of the reconcilement.

1. In Brooke the name of Paris does not occur after the wedding morning. His presence at the tomb, and death there in defence of the family honor appear to be inventions of Shakespeare, who has notably exalted the character of Juliet's wooer.

3. ***lay thee all along,*** lie at full length. Note the reflexive use.

12. Cf. *Hamlet*, v. 1. 266 ff., where the Queen strews flowers over Ophelia's grave and employs similar language.

12–7. For the form of these lines in Q 1, see Appendix A, IV. Metrically they make a sestette. See note on i. 2. 46–51, above.

14. *sweet water,* water which has been perfumed.

41. *take thou that.* Romeo throws him a purse.

44. *doubt,* distrust, have suspicions about.

45. *detestable.* For accent see Appendix D.

59. *youth.* Romeo consistently addresses Paris as too young a man to fight, just as he himself is addressed by Tybalt in iii. 1. As in that scene he shows here an aversion to personal combat and a desire for peace, but Fate is against him each time.

84. *lantern* here signifies a tower erected on top of a building and furnished with windows to admit light. Juliet's grave is like such a tower.

86. *presence,* presence chamber, or room in which a person of rank receives visitors.

87. *by a dead man.* "Romeo being now determined to put an end to his life, considers himself as already dead" (Malone).

90. *lightning before death.* Steevens shows by several quotations that this was a proverbial expression for an exaltation of the spirits just before expiring. The *lightning* just below is a pun for a lightening of spirits.

94–6. With this passage Steevens compares Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond* (1592), ll. 773–5:

> "And nought-respecting death (the last of paines)
> Plac'd his pale colours (th' ensigne of his might)
> Upon his new-got spoyle before his right."

96. *advanced,* raised, exalted; cf. iv. 5. 72, above.

97. In this address to Tybalt Shakespeare is once more closely following Brooke.

103. Fuller compares a passage in Struijs immediately following Romeo's receipt of the news of Juliet's death. There Romeo exclaims: "O death, O cruel death! thee will I curse to all eternity . . . O archer, void of reason, or else uncertain of thy aim! thou hast envied the earth the fostering of her, and thou grudgest me the joyful embraces of such a wife."

103–5. Here again, as Malone points out, is a close resemblance to Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond,* ll. 841–5, which run:

> "Ah, how me thinkes I see Death dallying seekes,
> To entertaine it selfe in Loves sweet place. . . . . .
> And ugly Death sits faire within her face."

110. *set up my everlasting rest,* a metaphor from card-playing which appears frequently in Elizabethan literature. For a player

to set up his rest meant literally to lay his heaviest wager, to venture all. Romeo also has in mind the literal meaning of the phrase, as has the King in *Lear*, i. 1. 125. Cf. too iv. 5. 6, above.

111. *inauspicious stars.* To the last Romeo ascribes his misfortunes to the influence of the planets.

115. "An everlasting bargain to Death, who buys up wholesale."

116. *conduct.* See Glossary, and cf. iii. 1. 129, above.

117. *desperate pilot.* Romeo has used the same metaphor before, i. 4. 112, above. But there he seems to refer to Fate, while here the pilot is himself.

121. *speed,* a guarding Power who promotes success < A. S. *spēd,* success.

131. *go with me.* Even the eminently sensible Friar has enough human nature in his make-up to fear going alone at night to a tomb.

145. *unkind.* For accentuation see Appendix D.

148. *comfortable,* comforting, inclined to comfort or console; cf. *uncomfortable,* iv. 5. 60.

162. *timeless,* untimely.

170. *rust.* Many editors prefer the *rest* of Q 1. Reference to a sheath was first made in Q 2, where the reading is that of the present text.

dies. On the stage to-day the play frequently ends here. The hero and the heroine are both dead, and what follows is thought to be in the nature of an anti-climax. But, as Dr. Fuller has suggested to me, this ending would not satisfy a story-loving Elizabethan audience. They would wish to know what became of the minor characters, and perhaps to have the moral of the story set down at length. Besides, as some one else suggests, it is Shakespeare's habit to use an anti-climax in order to bring the audience back to life.

173. *attach,* arrest.

176. *these two days.* The sleeping potion was to have its effect for "two and forty hours." Cf. iv. 1. 105.

179-80. Note the quibbling even at this juncture.

181. *circumstance.* See note on ii. 5, 36, above.

203. *his house,* the dagger's sheath. Cf. note on ii. 6. 12, above.

204. *on the back,* where the dagger was customarily worn, as Steevens proves by several citations.

207. *my old age.* Rolfe notes this as a slip. Probably the phrase is due to carelessness on Shakespeare's part, though in view of all her afflictions Lady Capulet may well have felt old.

210. *My wife is dead.* The tender sympathy of Lady Montague for her son effectively contrasts with Lady Capulet's hardness toward her daughter. Cf. i. 1. 123–4.

211. After this line in Q 1 we have: "And young Benvolio is deceased too."

214. *manners is.* For the usage of a singular verb with certain nouns plural in form but singular in meaning, cf. Abbott, § 333. *News* to-day is similarly used.

216. *outrage*, outcry, passionate outburst.

222. *parties of suspicion*, persons under suspicion, suspected ones. The plural of *party* in the sense of "people" is heard to-day, but outside of the courts is considered vulgar.

228 ff. "Shakespeare was led into this uninteresting narrative by following *Romeus and Juliet* too closely" (Malone). But Professor Chambers suggests that it is necessary to prepare Montague and Capulet for reconciliation.

229. *I will be brief.* In Brooke the Friar's speech is anything but brief.

247. *as.* Cf. Abbott, § 114, for the redundant use.

255. *closely*, secretly; our phrase, "keep it close," is founded on the same sense.

273. *in post*, post haste.

280. *made*, was doing, as frequently in Shakespeare.

284. *by and by.* See note to ii. 2. 151, above.

295. *brace of kinsmen*, *i. e.* Mercutio and Paris.

305-10. Note the sestette again.

308. According to Brooke, the Nurse and the Apothecary were punished, Romeo's servant was pardoned, and Friar Laurence retired to a hermitage.

APPENDIX A

READINGS OF THE FIRST QUARTO

As already stated in the Introduction, the accepted text of *Romeo and Juliet* is based not on the First Quarto (published by Danter in 1597), but chiefly on the Second Quarto (published by Creede in 1599), which bears on its title-page the statement that the play has been "newly corrected, augmented, and amended." The relation between the two quartos is clearly set forth by Mr. P. A. Daniel in the introduction to his edition of the *Parallel Texts:*

"A hasty and separate perusal of Q 1 may leave the reader with the impression that it represents an earlier play than that given in the subsequent editions; read line by line with Q 2 its true character soon becomes apparent. It is an edition made up partly from copies of portions of the original play, partly from recollection and from notes taken during the performance. Q 2 gives us for the first time a substantially true representation of the original play. Still, Q 1 is of great value, as it affords the means of correcting many errors which crept into the 'copy' from which Q 2 was printed, and also, in its more perfect portions, affords conclusive evidence that that 'copy' underwent revision, received some slight augmentations, and, in some few places, must have been entirely rewritten."

To portray this situation more graphically, information is given below as to (1) acts and scenes where Q 1 practically coincides with the present text; (2) passages in the accepted text omitted from Q 1; (3) some cases of evident garbling in Q 1; (4) some cases in which revision is evident between the writing of Q 1 and that of Q 2.

I. Passages in which Q 1 substantially agrees with Q 2

i. 1. 162–222; i. 2; i. 3. 1–48; i. 4. 1–16 and 35–114; i. 5. 29–146.

ii. 1; ii. 2. 1–120; ii. 3; ii. 4. 1–204.

iii. 1. 1–33; iii. 3. 1–117 and 155–74; iii. 4; iii. 5. 1–36, 130–205 and 214–42.

iv. 1. 1–51 and 61–98; iv. 2; iv. 4; iv. 5. 107–50.

v. 1.

II. Passages omitted from Q 1

(This list is not intended to be complete. Minor verbal differences are necessarily not taken into account. For practical purposes passages of less than five lines have been excluded.)

i. 1. 67–87, 115–22, 136–46, 151–61, 223–44; i. 3. 49–57, 69–73, 79–95; i. 4. 17–28; i. 5. 1–17, 24–8.

ii. Chorus; ii. 2. 121–35, 150–6; ii. 3. 9–14; ii. 4. 205–31; ii. 5. 5–17, 20–4, 28–37; ii. 6 (Rewritten. Cf. IV, below).

iii. 1. 52–8, 95–113 (Rewritten), 160–8; iii. 2. 5–33, 42–51, 57–60 (Rewritten), 74–82, 93–9, 102–6, 114–22, 132–9; iii. 3. 118–34, 149–54; iii. 5. 37–41, 60–4, 72–7, 83–8, 97–103, 206–13.

iv. 1. 52–60, 99–103, 106–14, 116–26; iv. 2. 40–5; iv. 3. 8–13, 15–20, 24–56 (Rewritten); iv. 5. 26–32, 43–64 (Rewritten), 66–79, 82–97, 102–6.

v. 2. 24–9; v. 3. 6–11, 13–7 (Rewritten), 79–86, 92–102, 104–8, 111–6, 177–83, 217–21, 224–31, 236–42, 245–9 (Rewritten), 252–6.

III. Instances of Garbled Lines in Q 1

Numerous lines in Q 1 show text corruption, due either to misprinting or to misunderstanding the original version. A few of the more striking cases will illustrate how the corruption arose.

In Q 1 the Prologue reads:

> "Two houshold Frends alike in dignitie,
> (In faire *Verona*, where we lay our Scene)
> From civill broyles broke into enmitie,
> Whose civill warre makes civill handes uncleane.
> From forth the fatall loynes of these two foes,
> A paire of starre-crost Louers tooke their life:
> Whose misadventures, piteous overthrowes,
> (Through the continuing of their Fathers strife,
> And death-markt passage of their Parents rage)
> Is now the two howres traffique of our Stage.
> The which if you with patient ears attend,
> What here we want wee'l studie to amend."

Though these lines are the same in effect as the lines in other quartos, on comparison one will find only twelve lines in the Q 1 version as against fourteen in Q 2. Q 1 omits altogether l. 11, confuses the wording of ll. 9 and 10, combining the two, and makes minor changes in other lines.

i. 5. 107 reads: "Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake."

In place of this Q 1 has: "Saints doe not moove though: grant nor praier forsake."

ii. 2. 188: "Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!"

Q 1 runs: "I would that I were sleep and peace of sweet to rest."

iii. 1. 12–4: "Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy, and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved."

Q 1: "Go too, thou art as hot a Iacke being moovde, and as soone moovde to be moodie, and as soone moodie to be moovd."

iii. 5. 44–5: "I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
For in a minute there are many days."

Q 1: "I must heare from thee everie day in the hower:
For in an hower there are manie minutes,
Minutes are dayes, so will I number them."

iii. 5. 226–7: "Your first is dead; or 't were as good he were,
As living here and you no use of him."

Q 1: "As for your husband he is dead:
Or twere as good he were, for you have no use of him."

iv. 5. 38–40: "Death is my son-in-law, Death is my heir;
My daughter he hath wedded: I will die,
And leave him all."

Q 1: "Death is my Sonne in Law, to him I give all that I have."

v. 3. 133–4: "And fearfully did menace me with death,
If I did stay to look on his intents."

Q 1: "On paine of death he chargde me to be gone,
And not for to disturbe him in his enterprize."

v. 3. 140–1: "Alack, alack, what blood is this which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?"

Q 1: "What bloud is this that staines the entrance
Of this marble stony monument?"

IV. Passages in Q 1 revised in the Composition of Q 2

Comparison of certain passages in Q 1 with corresponding lines in Q 2 point clearly to the author's revision of the play after Q 1 was written. These passages from Q 1 follow.

Corresponding to ii. 6 of our text, Q 1 reads:

Enter Romeo, Frier.

Rom: Now Father *Laurence*, in thy holy grant
Consists the good of me and *Iuliet.*
Fr: Without more words I will doo all I may,
To make you happie if in me it lye.
Rom: This morning here she pointed we should meet,
And consumate those never parting bands,
Witnes of our harts love by ioyning hands,
And come she will.
Fr: I gesse she will indeed,
Youths love is quicke, swifter than swiftest speed.

Enter Iuliet somewhat fast, and embraceth Romeo.

See where she comes.
So light of foote nere hurts the troden flower:
Of love and ioy, see see the soveraigne power.
Iul: Romeo.
Rom: My *Iuliet* welcome. As doo waking eyes
(Cloasd in Nights mysts) attend the frolicke Day,
So *Romeo* hath expected *Iuliet*,
And thou art come.
Iul: I am (if I be Day)
Come to my Sunne: shine foorth, and make me faire.
Rom: All beauteous fairnes dwelleth in thine eyes.
Iul: Romeo from thine all brightnes doth arise.
Fr: Come wantons, come, the stealing houres do passe
Defer imbracements till some fitter time,
Part for a while, you shall not be alone,
Till holy Church haue ioynd ye both in one.
Rom: Lead holy Father, all delay seemes long.
Iul: Make hast, make hast, this lingring doth us wrong.
Fr: O, soft and faire makes sweetest worke they say.
Hast is a common hindrer in crosse way. *Exeunt omnes.*

Corresponding to iii. 1. 95–113, Q 1 has:

Rom: What art thou hurt man, the wound is not deepe.

Mer: Noe not so deepe as a Well, not so wide as a barne doore, but it will serve I warrant. What meant you to come betweene us? I was hurt under your arme.

Rom: I did all for the best.

Mer: Apoxe of your houses, I am fairely drest. Sirra goe fetch me a Surgeon.

Boy: I goe my Lord.

Mer: I am pepperd for this world, I am sped yfaith, he hath made wormes meate of me, & ye aske for me to morrow you shall finde me a grave-man. A poxe of your houses, I shall be fairely mounted upon foure mens shoulders: For your house of the *Mountegues* and the *Capolets:* and then some peasantly rogue, some Sexton, some base slave shall write my Epitapth, that *Tybalt* came and broke the Princes Lawes, and *Mercutio* was slaine for the first and second cause. Wher 's the Surgeon?

Boy: Hee 's come sir.

Mer: Now heele keepe a mumbling in my guts on the other side, come *Benvolio*, lend me thy hand: a poxe of your houses.

Exeunt.

Corresponding to iii. 2. 57–60, Q. 1 reads:

Ah *Romeo, Romeo*, what disaster hap
Hath severd thee from thy true *Juliet?*
Ah why should Heaven so much conspire with Woe,
Or Fate envie our happie Marriage,
So soone to sunder us by timelesse Death?

Corresponding to iv. 3. 24–58 are these lines:

What if this Potion should not worke at all,
Must I of force be married to the Countie?
This shall forbid it. Knife, lye thou there.
What if the Frier should give me this drinke
To poyson mee, forfeare I should disclose
Our former marriage? Ah, I wrong him much,
He is a holy and religious Man:
I will not entertaine so bad a thought.
What if I should be stifled in the Toomb?
Awake an houre before the appointed time:
Ah then I feare I shall be lunaticke,
And playing with my dead forefathers bones,

Dash out my franticke braines. Me thinkes I see
My Cosin *Tybalt* weltring in his bloud,
Seeking for *Romeo:* stay *Tybalt* stay,
Romeo I come, this doe I drinke to thee.

Corresponding to iv. 5. 41–64 are these lines:

Par: Have I thought long to see this mornings face,
And doth it now present such prodegies?
Accurst, unhappy, miserable man,
Forlorne, forsaken, destitute I am:
Borne to the world to be a slave in it.
Distrest, remediles, and unfortunate.
O heavens, O nature, wherefore did you make me,
To live so vile, so wretched as I shall.
Cap: O heere she lies that was our hope, our ioy,
And being dead, dead sorrow nips us all.

All at once cry out and wring their hands.

All cry: And all our ioy, and all our hope is dead,
Dead, lost, undone, absented, wholy fled.
Cap: Cruel, uniust, impartiall destinies,
Why to this day have you preserv'd my life?
To see my hope, my stay, my ioy, my life,
Deprivde of sence, of life, of all by death,
Cruell, uniust, impartiall destinies.
Cap: O sad fac'd sorrow map of misery,
Why this sad time have I desird to see.
This day, this uniust, this impartiall day
Wherein I hop'd to see my comfort full,
To be deprivde by suddaine destinie.
Moth: O woe, alacke, distrest, why should I live?
To see this day, this miserable day.
Alacke the time that ever I was borne.
To be partaker of this destinie,
Alacke the day, alacke and welladay.

Corresponding to v. 3. 12–7 are the following lines:

Par: Sweete Flower, with flowers I strew thy Bridale bed:
Sweete Tombe that in thy circuite dost containe,
The perfect modell of eternitie:
Faire *Iuliet* that with Angells dost remaine,
Accept this latest favour at my hands,
That living honourd thee, and being dead
With funerall praises doo adorne thy Tombe.

APPENDIX B

EARLIER VERSIONS OF THE STORY

Tabular View

Shakespeare compared with Brooke and Painter

Note. — Below is an attempt to represent graphically the agreement between *Romeo and Juliet* and earlier versions of the same story by Arthur Brooke and William Painter. In the first column are references to the play, while in the second the corresponding passages in Brooke's poem are indicated. In the second column passages enclosed thus *——* refer to matter contained in Brooke alone and not in Painter, or his immediate source, Boaistuau. No table, however, can satisfactorily present the situation, for not only has Shakespeare changed numerous details of the story that cannot be represented in tabular form, but also his inspiration for a phrase or an incident is frequently to be found at some point in Brooke far removed from the context. For example, the wording at iv. 5. 84–90, was undoubtedly suggested by Brooke, ll. 2507–14; but the foundation of that scene was laid for Shakespeare in ll. 2403–72.

Shakespeare		Brooke
Prologue,	1–14.	Argument, ll. 1–14.
i. 1.	1–87.	ll. 955–92.
	88–165.	. . . .
	166–244.	89–154.
2.	1–5.	. . . .
	6–19.	1857–60. 1881–88.
	20–106.	. . . .
3.		. . . .
4.		. . . .

Shakespeare		Brooke
5.	1–55.	155–252.
	56–113.	. . . .
	114–46.	319–64.
Prologue to ii.		. . . .
ii. 1.		. . . .
2.		467–564.
3.		565–616.
4.	1–181.	. . . .
	182–232.	* — 631–73. — *
5.		* — 674–704. — *
6.		743–72.
iii. 1.	1–58.	. . . .
	59–202.	955–1074.
2.	1–72.	. . . .
	73–137.	1075–162.
	138–43.	1229–34.
3.		* — 1257–510. — *
4.		[suggested by 2256–78.]
5.	1–64.	1701–28.
	65–78.	1781–806.
	79–242.	1887–2004.
iv. 1.	1–43.	[suggested by 2265–72.]
	44–126.	2005–191.[1]
2.		2192–255.
3.		2313–402.
4.		* — 2281–7. — *
5.		2403–72.
v. 1.		2515–96.[2]
2.		2473–503.
3.	1–21.	. . . .
	22–48.	2613–30.
	49–87.	. . . .
	88–310.	2631–3020.

[1] Brooke nowhere indicates how long the force of the powder would last, while Painter says it would continue "forty hours at the least," and Shakespeare, iv. 1. 105, makes it "two and forty hours."

[2] Painter makes Romeo pay the Apothecary fifty ducats; Shakespeare, v. 1. 59, forty ducats; Brooke, l. 2577, fifty crowns of gold.

1. Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet*

Arthur Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet* is a poem of 3020 lines, of six or seven feet each, rhymed in couplets. It was first printed at London in 1562. The text of the poem is preceded by a prose address to the reader, which, in pointing the moral of the story, strongly denounces its hero and heroine for neglecting the advice of parents and friends and concealing their marriage. Then comes an apparent reference to an earlier play on the subject, which is discussed elsewhere in this volume (*Introduction*, pp.xi.–xiii). Another address to the reader, in verse, informs him that Brooke has written other works, but this, "the eldest of them," is the first to be offered to the public. "The Argument," composed of fourteen rhymed pentameter lines, briefly sets forth the plot. The poem itself follows.

It opens with a picture of Verona, happy under the rule of Prince Escalus, but disturbed by strife between the Capulets[1] and and Montagues.[1] Their wrath the Prince tried to assuage by gentle means and persuasion, but when these availed not, "by thund'ring threats and princely power."[2] Meanwhile Romeus, a Montague, an unbearded youth, famous for his beauty, fell in love with a fair maiden.[3] To her he wrote, sent messages, and went in person to plead for grace, but she would not grant him a friendly look. The more she retired, the more he was pricked on. After many months, "hopeless of his recure," he thought to leave Verona, hoping that thereby he might quench the fire in his bosom. But he doubted whether to take this step. "*He moans the day, he wakes the long and weary night.*" His kindred and allies knew not what ailed him. One, "the trustiest" of his companions, "far more than he with counsel filled, and riper of his years,"[4] rebuked Romeus for so wasting away the best part of his age. For Romeus's own sake, and for his father's sake he coun-

[1] Brooke has *Capelet, Capilet, Capel; Montagew, Montagewe, Montegue, Montague, etc.* Mr. J. J. Munro, in the latest edition of the poem, The Shakespeare Classics (London, 1908), modernizes the spelling, and is here followed.

[2] Apparently a hint from which Shakespeare built the whole conflict in i. 1. But the events of the latter resemble those of the fight which resulted in Tybalt's death.

[3] Rosaline is not named.

[4] Benvolio is not named by Brooke or Painter. Fuller states that he corresponds to Jacomo in the Dutch play.

selled the youth to remove the veil of love which blinded him, or else to bestow his heart elsewhere. To these words Romeus listened attentively, and pledged himself to frequent feasts by day, banquets by night, and to resort everywhere that ladies were wont to meet. All that he saw he would like indifferently, viewing them "with unallured eye."

i. 2. "The weary winter nights restore the Christmas games," and the season invites "townish dames" to banquet. Capel, the chief of his house, began the banqueting. There was no lady or knight in Verona that Capel did not himself bid to the feast, or invite "by his name in paper sent."

i. 4. Yet not a Montague would enter the gate, "save Romeus, and he in mask with hidden face," together with five companions pressed thither. After masking awhile, all unmasked and showed themselves to the ladies, though "bashful Romeus" withdrew into a nook. There the bright torches disclosed him to every one, and ladies wondered at his shape and beauty, and also at his courage in putting himself among so many foes. The Capulets disdained his presence, yet sup-

i. 5. pressed their ire, being loth, perhaps, to offend their guests, or perhaps fearing the Prince's wrath. Romeus, observing the ladies carefully, at length saw one of whom he told himself her "*like ne hath, ne shall be seen, ne lireth in our days.*" While he looked on her, his former love was quite driven out. Not bold enough to ask her name, Romeus fed his eyes on her. Juliet, for so was the damsel called, cast eyes on him and was touched by Love's arrow. A comely knight now led Juliet forth to dance, and Romeus took a place near the seat that must be hers after the measure was done. At one side of her chair then sat Romeo,[1] while on the other side sat one Mercutio:

"A courtier that each where was highly had in price,
For he was courteous of his speech, and pleasant of device.
Even as a lion would among the lambs be bold,
Such was among the bashful maids Mercutio to behold." [2]

Mercutio seized Juliet's right hand, although by nature his own hands were twice as cold as "frozen mountain ice." Romeus thereupon caught her left hand. She pressed his palm in reply, and seeing that Love kept him silent, she opened her mouth to

[1] So spelled by Brooke, here alone, to rhyme with Mercutio.
[2] Mercutio is not mentioned elsewhere in the poem.

bless the time of his coming. Inquiring the reason he learned from her that her hand had been frozen by Mercutio's but was warmed by his. In response, Romeus affirmed that the love for her in his heart was far warmer than his hand. Juliet assured him that she was his, and, "*my honour saved*," ready to obey his will. Romeus asking of some her name, was dismayed to find that her father was a Capulet. He railed on Fortune and Love, but was glad that he served "*not a cruel one, as he had done of old.*" The maid likewise desiring to learn his name, called her old Nurse. "*What twain are those*," she asked, "*which press unto the door?*" Then she inquired the name of the one "*in masking weed*," and was answered, "*His name is Romeus . . . a Montague.*" With a show of joy "she cloaked inward smart," so that neither mother nor Nurse descried the hidden harm.

Then Juliet went to bed but not to sleep, pondering over her wretched state. She questioned whether in the person
ii. 2. of Romeus she had not been stung by a snake, whose purpose was to stain her honor by subtle sleight. But she concluded that this could not be in one of such perfect shape and beauty. Besides, she had seen in his face sure signs that he loved her. Finally she decided to love and serve him if he would make her his wife, for she hoped that this new alliance would bring "*unto our houses such a peace as ever shall endure.*" By this time Romeus had forsaken his weary bed, and passing with lingering steps by Juliet's home, cast his eyes up to her window, where he espied his love, and was greeted with pleasant cheer. Often passing so through the coming days, in a happy hour he espied a garden plot which "fronted full upon her leaning place." Thither he went by night unafraid, for "*whom maketh Love not bold?*" Leaning out of her window one evening, Juliet beheld her lover in the bright moonlight and rejoiced to see him. But her first words were to reprove his recklessness. "*What if your deadly foes, my kinsmen, saw you here?*" Romeus replied that if need should arise, he could defend himself, but that life was not so dear that he would desire to live if he might sacrifice it for her sake. Juliet declared her heart knit to him, adding that if wedlock were his end, "Both me and mine I will all whole to you betake, And *following you whereso you go*, my father's house forsake." But she warned him to cease his suit if his intent was not honorable. At this Romeus rejoiced and promised to go before sunrise to Friar Laurence, his "*ghostly sire*," for advice; then to return at the same hour next night and tell her of it.

This barefoot friar was a doctor of divinity, acquainted with the secrets of nature, and beloved by all Verona. Of Romeus
ii. 3. he was specially loved, and him the Friar liked best of all Verona youth. Romeus told him the lovers' whole story and with weeping eyes prayed him to accomplish all their desire.

"A thousand doubts and mo in th' old man's head arose,
A thousand dangers like to come the old man doth disclose,
And from the spousal rites he redeth him refrain,
Perhaps he shall be bet advised within a week or twain.
Advice is banished quite from those that follow love,
Except advice to what they like their bending mind do move.
As well the father might have counselled him to stay
That from a mountain's top thrown down is falling half the way,
As warn his friend to stop amid his race begun,
Whom Cupid with his smarting whip enforceth forth to run.
Part won by earnest suit, the friar doth grant at last;
And part, because he thinks the storms, so lately overpast,
Of both the households' wrath, this marriage might appease;
So that they should not rage again, but quite for ever cease.
The respite of a day he asketh to devise
What way were best, unknown, to end so great an enterprise." [1]

Meanwhile Juliet unwrapped the secrets of her heart to the Nurse, who was won "with promised hire" to hide them
ii. 4. in her breast. To Romeus the Nurse was sent to learn the Friar's advice and the plan for marriage. "*On Saturday*," quoth Romeus, "*if Juliet come to shrift, she shall be shrived and married.*" Such a crafty wile pleased mightily the Nurse, who promised to devise some excuse to have her come. Then she began babbling of Juliet's early years.

"'*A pretty babe*,' quod she, '*it was when it was young;*
Lord, how it could full prettily have prated with it tongue!'"

At last this talk wearied even Romeus, who drew from his pocket six crowns of gold; for this gift she bowed low.
ii. 5. To Juliet she then hied, and closing the door began to praise the shape and the face of Romeus. The girl answered that so she had ever thought, but what of the marriage? "*Soft*," replied the Nurse, "*I fear your hurt by sudden joy.*" Juliet affirmed that she desired not to play, and learning that the wedding was no further off than Saturday, rejoiced greatly.

[1] Munro, ll. 597–612.

On Saturday Juliet got her mother's consent to go to shrift, with the Nurse and a maid. Asking if Friar Laurence
ii. 6. had leisure[1] to hear her shrift, she was taken into his cell, while the Nurse and the maid were left outside. In the cell Romeus was already waiting; to him "*Each minute seemed an hour, and every hour a day.*" The lovers then made confession to the Friar, and they were married. Romeus now asked his wife to send the Nurse to him again that afternoon to get a ladder of cord, by which at night he would climb to her window. The day seemed long to the lovers, "*each hour seems twenty year.*"

At the appointed hour Romeus walked to Capulet's garden, "so light he wox he leapt the wall," climbed the ladder, and
iii. 5. met his wife. Juliet had "the waxen quariers" lighted that she might behold her husband's beauty. Embracing him she declared:

"*Let Fortune do, and death, their worst to me,*
Full recompensed am I for all my passed harms."[2]

Each talked for some time. Thus the night passed.

"*The hastiness of Phoebus' steeds in great despite they blame,*
The nigh approach of day's return these seely fools dis-eased."[3]

Romeus then took his leave but came again at the same hour every other night until misfortune overtook him.

Their bliss lasted only a month or twain. On the morning after Easter Day Tybalt, the Capulet's leader, called to his
iii. 1. followers to wreak vengeance on the Montagues, and himself led the furious charge. On each side the fray was long and stout. Hearing the noise, Romeus ran to the place of combat with a few companions, and they were moved with pity for the great slaughter. "*Part, friends,*" cried Romeus, but the combatants heard him not. Then he leapt into the throng to part and bar the blows. Tybalt thrust at him and would have pierced him through had not Romeus worn a coat of mail. "*I but part the fray,*" quoth Romeus. "*No, coward, traitor, boy,*" replied Tybalt, striking a blow at his head. Romeus returned the blow, they fought savagely, until Tybalt fell, slain by a thrust through the

[1] Cf. iv. 1. 37.
[2] Cf. ii. 6. 7–8, Romeo's challenge to Fate just before the wedding.
[3] Cf. iii. 2. 1 ff.; iii. 5. 1 ff.

throat. Before the Prince the Capulets brought Tybalt's corpse, craving punishment for the slayer of their kinsman. The Montagues pleaded Romeus free of fault. Lookers-on asserted that Tybalt began the fight. But the Prince sentenced Romeus to exile, and charged both households on peril of their lives to cease the strife. News of these events caused grief everywhere; but most of all to Juliet, who tore her hair and rent her clothing, bewailing Tybalt's death and denouncing Romeus. Again repenting she blamed herself for touching the honor of her husband's name. Tybalt she pronounced faulty and Romeus guiltless. Then she swooned away, and some time later was found by the Nurse, who revived and comforted her. "*Tybalt, your friend, is dead,*" quoth the old woman, "*what, ween you by your tears to call him back again?*"[1] She dared say that Romeus within a month or two would be called back from exile, and she urged Juliet to arm herself with patience. At her own suggestion, she was sent to Laurence's cell, where Romeus lurked.

iii. 2.

Laurence had bestowed Romeus in a place hidden and sealed. When the Nurse came he sent Juliet word that Romeus would visit her again that night at the usual hour. Then the Friar, shutting the door, gave to Romeus the tidings of his banishment. Hearing this, Romeus tore his hair, beat his breast on the ground, rose and struck his head against the walls, fell down again, and called for speedy death. The Friar tried to repress him but spoke to the air. With sobs and faltering tongue Romeus blamed Nature, the time and place of his birth, the cruel son of Venus, Fortune, himself for not being slain in the fight with Tybalt. In short, he blamed all the world but Juliet. Then the Friar broke in:

iii. 3.

"'*Art thou,' quoth he, 'a man? Thy shape saith, so thou art;*
Thy crying and thy weeping eyes denote a woman's heart . . . .
So that I stood in doubt this hour, at the least,
If thou a man or woman wert, or else a brutish beast.'"[2]

He reminded Romeus how valiantly he had slain his foe, while he, himself remained unhurt, and upbraided him for blaming Love and his fate. Then, like the Nurse, he foretold that Romeus would be called home "*with double honor*" in a short time. To this counsel Romeus gave ear and soon ceased to weep.

[1] It is Lady Capulet who uses this argument to Juliet in iii. 5. 71.

[2] Note Shakespeare's compression of the same thought, iii. 3. 109–11.

During the visit to his wife the same night, Juliet begged that she might accompany him in disguise to Mantua. But
iii. 5. Romeus would not listen to this plan for fear of pursuit and the cruel punishment of both by Capulet. He promised that he would, by the help of friends, within four months be recalled with honor. Fair Lucifer, the morning star, dawned too soon and the lovers parted. Romeus, disguised as a merchant-venturer, walked out of Verona's gates and on to Mantua, whence he sent his man with words of comfort to the Friar. There Romeus soon told his story to the Duke and began plotting for his pardon. But his fortune he ceased not to bewail. At Verona Juliet likewise mourned, growing so pale that her mother besought her to forget Tybalt's death. Juliet replied that she had shed "the last of Tybalt's tears," and henceforth they should not gush out "*by conduits of the eyne.*"

Unable to get at the root of her daughter's sorrow, the mother begged Capulet to provide a husband for the girl, thinking that her grief was wrought by envy of her married companions. The old man rejoined that these things had often been on his
i. 2. mind, but that he thought Juliet, who was scarce sixteen years old, "*too young to be a bride.*" Howsoever, he would try to find some one to cure her sickness. Conferring with his friends, he discovered many who wished his daughter's hand because she was both fair and wise, and her father's only heir. Of all the suitors he liked best the County Paris, and promised to do all in his power to bring about a match between him and Juliet. The wife joyed to receive the tidings.

Lady Capulet straightway hied to Juliet, telling her the plan of "*her careful, loving father,*" and praising Paris's person,
iii. 5. his features, and his gifts of fortune. But when Juliet perceived her parents' intent, she thought that she would rather be torn asunder by wild horses than be forsworn. So she answered her mother with unaccustomed boldness. Rather than grant him to possess her smallest part, she would slay herself. On her knees she pleaded that she might be allowed to live as heretofore. Amazed, the mother sought her husband and told him all. "The testy old man, wroth," ordered the maid to be brought in at once. Juliet came willingly but fell weeping and grovelling at his feet. The father, calling her unthankful and disobedient, and reminding her of the power Roman fathers had over their children, declared that "*both thou and I unworthy are too much*" of Paris, and swore that if "*by Wednesday next,*" at "*our castle called Free-*

town," she would not assent to Paris's suit, he would give all he had " away from her," and then " wed " her for life *to a* close and hard *jail*.[1] Then father and mother departed, and Juliet sought her chamber to eke out the night with weeping.

Early in the morning she again went to the Friar, and to him poured forth all her grief, threatening to end her life that
iv. 1. day. Alarmed, the Friar went to his chamber and meditated on the danger to her, to Romeus, and to himself if the truth were made public. At last pity won his heart, and taking out of his closet a little glass containing a certain powder, he returned to Juliet. Charging her to keep this secret from all, even the Nurse,[2] he advised her to cast off fear, and early on her marriage day, to fill the vial with water and drink it off. In half an hour she would fall into a slumber, which her kinsmen and friends would take for death. She would be buried in the costly tomb of her forefathers, and there rest until Romeus came from Mantua and with the Friar took her unharmed from the tomb. Then she and Romeus might go to Mantua and live there in secret until time came to make the news known. To this plan Juliet gladly assented.

Meeting her mother on the return home, the girl told her that she had confessed her sins to the Friar and had promised
iv. 2. to be ordered by him. Therefore, though she had long forsworn the rite of marriage, she was now willing to obey her mother's will and to marry the County at the appointed time and place. She would now go to her closet to pick out " *the bravest garments and the richest jewels there*." Much pleased, " the simple mother " ran to give the news to Capulet, who in turn bore the tidings to Paris. He craved that he might visit Juliet at once. On her mother's advice Juliet gave Paris her most courteous speech and pleasant looks. Thus she so stole his away heart that he prayed the parents "*the wedlock knot to knit soon up*."[3] Great preparations were made for the wedding; there were such rich attire, such furniture, such abundance of dainties as one could wish for. Nothing seemed too dear for purchase.

To her Nurse Juliet told the same story as to her parents. The Nurse declared that she had done well, praising Paris ten times more than she had praised Romeus. Why should she languish for Romeus, who would not return? These wicked words greatly

[1] Cf. iii. 5. 141.

[2] In Shakespeare the motivation is much better. Juliet loses her confidence in the Nurse.

[3] Cf. iv. 2. 24.

"dis-eased" Juliet. When the bride perceived her hour approach, she told the Nurse that she desired to sleep alone that night since she purposed to pray to "*the heavenly minds*" for their smiles "*upon the doings of to-morrow.*"[1] The Nurse then went away and shut the door. Following the Friar's directions Juliet now made the mixture, but was suddenly shaken by a deadly fear of the course she had resolved on. What if the powder failed to work? "Is there any one," she asked herself, "*so much past hope as I?*"[2] She became fearful of serpents, of the loathsome air of the tomb where her ancestors rested; she foresaw the danger of stifling before the coming of Romeus and the Friar.

iv. 3.

"*And whilst she in these thoughts doth dwell somewhat too long,*
The force of her imagining did wax anon so strong,
That she surmised she saw, out of the hollow vault,
A grisly thing to look upon, the carcase of Tybalt;
Right in the selfsame sort that she few days before
Had seen him in his blood embrued, to death eke wounded sore.
And then when she again within herself had weighed
That quick she should be buried there, and by his side be laid,
All comfortless, for she shall living fere have none,
But many a rotten carcase, and full many a naked bone;
Her dainty tender parts gan shiver all for dread,
Her golden hairs did stand upright upon her chillish head.
Then presséd with the fear that she there livéd in,
A sweat as cold as mountain ice pierced through her slender skin,
That with the moisture hath wet every part of hers:
And more besides, she vainly thinks, whilst vainly thus she fears,
A thousand bodies dead have compassed her about,
And lest they will dismember her she greatly stands in doubt.
But when she felt her strength began to wear away,
By little and little, and in her heart her fear increaséd aye,
Dreading that weakness might, or foolish cowardice,
Hinder the execution of the purposed enterprise,
As she had frantic been, in haste the glass she caught,
And up she drank the mixture quite, withouten farther thought.
Then on her breast she crossed her arms long and small,
And so, her senses failing her, into a trance did fall."

Soon after sunrise the Nurse opened the door, calling softly, then louder, "*Lady you sleep too long; the Earl will raise you by and by.*" But she spoke to the deaf, for there lay Juliet's body stiff and colder than marble. Returning in haste to the mother, with scratched face and torn hair, "*Dead,*

iv. 5.

[1] Cf. iv. 3.2–4

[2] Cf. iv. 1. 45.

quoth she, '*is my child.*'" Lady Capulet rushed to her daughter's bed and was soon crying out on Death. And while she thus lamented, the father, Paris, and a company of gentleman and ladies of Verona pressed in to honor the wedding feast; but hearing the heavy news they mourned as if it was the day of wrath. More than all the rest was the father's heart smitten, so "that he ne had the power his daughter to beweep ne yet to speak." If ever there was a "*lamentable day*," that was it.

While Juliet slept, Friar Laurence sent a letter by a trusty friar of his house to Romeus, in which he wrote of everything
v. 2. that had passed, and begged him to come the next night to take Juliet out of the tomb. Friar John with this letter hastened to Mantua, but, following an Italian custom, went to a house there to get another friar to accompany him about the the town. Having entered the house, he might not come out again because one brother a day or two before had died of the plague, and all within had been charged not to go outside their convent gate. Knowing not what the letter held, he deferred till the morrow to send to Romeus.

Meanwhile Verona was busied about Juliet's obsequies.

"*Now is the parents' mirth quite changed into moan,*
And now to sorrow is returned the joy of every one;
And now the wedding weeds for mourning weeds they change,
And Hymenë into a dirge; — alas! it seemeth strange:
Instead of marriage gloves, now funeral gloves they have,
And whom they should see marriéd, they follow to the grave.
The feast that should have been of pleasure and of joy,
Hath every dish and cup filled full of sorrow and annoy." [1]

The body of the girl with uncovered face was borne on the bier to the Capulets' tomb. So it came about that Romeus's man, who had been sent to Verona to spy out the doings of the Capulets, met his master's wife on the way to her burial. Because he knew her death would touch most his master, he "*hied away in*
v. 1. *post*" to carry him the news, announcing that he himself had seen her laid within the tomb. With open ears Romeus too soon received this message; his spirit was almost ready to break out of its prison house. But the sudden fancy occurred to him that if he died near her, his death would be a hundred thousand times more glorious, and his lady better pleased. Drying his tears he walked abroad, commanding his servant to

[1] Cf. iv. 5. 84–90

stay in the chamber. At the door of a drug shop sat unbusied an apothecary, whose poverty Romeus guessed from his countenance and the few boxes displayed. Although the city's law forbade the sale of poison, Romeus believed that this man might sell what could not be got by friendship. He therefore offered him fifty gold crowns to deliver poison that would kill in less than a half-hour one who should devour it. Won by covetise, the wretch sought poison and gave to Romeus, saying that half of the "*speeding gear*" would serve to kill in less than a half-hour the strongest man alive.

Romeus then again sent his man, Peter by name,[1] to Verona, charging him to provide lights and instruments for opening the tomb, but not to bewray his master's secrets. Ordering ink and paper, Romeus penned a letter to his sire, telling his whole story and his plan to take his life. He then hired a post-horse, and with the shade of night entered Verona, where he met

v. 3. Peter waiting with lantern and tools wherewith to pry open the tomb. Getting his man's aid in removing the stone before the sepulchre, Romeus sent him off with strict charge not to come near him, but to present the letter to Montague next day. Now he descended into the tomb and beheld with piteous eye his wife's body. A hundred times he kissed and embraced her. At length he drew out the poison and devoured the greater part. Next calling on Juliet, he affirmed that he could not wish for a more glorious tomb than to be buried with her. Turning to Tybalt's corpse, he cried with outstretched hands for mercy, demanding to know what more amends the slain man could ask than to see his slayer poison himself before him. Finally praying Christ for pity on his sinful soul, he fell dead upon Juliet's corpse.

The Friar knowing the instant that Juliet should waken, but wondering that he heard not from Romeus, went to the tomb with meet instruments. Horrified to see a light there, he learned from Peter that his master had been in the tomb some half-hour. Both entering found the breathless corpse of Romeus. Just then Juliet awaking knew Laurence and at once asked, "Where is my Romeus?" The Friar fearing that they should be taken, pointed to the corpse and told all that had taken place. He then tried to instil patience in her, promising to place her in some religious house, where she could abide the rest of her days in peace. But as soon as she saw Romeus, "*she did unstop the conduit of her tears*," she

[1] Balthasar in Shakespeare, while Peter is the Nurse's stupid boy.

tore her hair, embraced his corpse, and kissed him a thousand times. Just then the Friar and Peter, hearing a sudden noise, fled. Left alone Juliet drew the dagger worn by Romeus, and embracing and kissing him once more, girt her heart through.

The watch, seeing a light in the tomb, suspected enchanters and went inside to learn the truth. There they found Romeus and Juliet dead in each other's arms, and discovering the two murderers, as they thought, lodged them that night in a deep dungeon. Next day the Prince ordered an open examination, and had the two bodies placed on a high stage. The Friar defended himself in a long discourse, and his story was borne out by Peter and by the letter of Romeus. The Prince then decreed that the Friar and Peter should go free, but that the Nurse should be banished and the Apothecary hanged. Friar Laurence " of himself" retired to a hermitage, where he died five years later. The Capulets and the Montagues, now won by pity, forgot their enmity. And the bodies of Romeus and Juliet were raised into one stately tomb, which is still to be seen in Verona.

2. Painter's Version of the Story

The story of " Rhomeo and Julietta " forms the twenty-fifth novel in the second volume of William Painter's prose *Palace of Pleasure*, first published 1567, five years after Brooke's poem. The novel is entitled, "The goodly history of the true, and constant love betweene Rhomeo and Julietta, the one of whom died of poyson, and the other of sorrow, and hevinesse: wherein be comprysed many adventures of love, and other devises touchinge the same." Painter's version follows closely the French version of Boaistuau, in his *Histoires Tragiques* (1559), which is also the source of Brooke. But Brooke enlarged on his story and modified it considerably, where Painter adhered to the original. Thus the differences between Brooke and Painter are due almost entirely to Brooke's changes. These differences may be briefly summed up :

So far as incidents go, Painter does not mention the bribery of the Nurse by Juliet or Romeo, says little of the Nurse's visit to Romeo, nothing of her teasing announcement of Romeo's message to Juliet, and nothing of Romeo's behavior in the Friar's cell on hearing his doom of banishment; and he makes Juliet eighteen years old instead of sixteen. As to names of characters Painter has Rhomeo ; Julietta; Montesches ; Capellets ; Señor Escala, or

Lord Bartholomew of Escala; Anthonie Capellet (for Brooke's Old Capilet, or simply Capilet); Thibault; Pietro or Petre; Paris, Count of Lodronne; Friar Anselm (for Friar John); the castle is Villafranco (for Freetown); all in place of the corresponding forms in Brooke. It will be observed that Shakespeare almost invariably follows the poem. But this is not all, for Brooke has really created a living comic character in the garrulous, vulgar, shrewd old Nurse, and has given Shakespeare valuable hints for the development of other characters. Moreover the longer, more prolix narrative of Brooke contains many details not found in Painter, and the verbal similarities noted between Shakespeare and Brooke are usually not to be discovered when Painter's version is compared with Shakespeare's. All this makes it evident that Shakespeare was following Brooke rather than Painter in composing this drama.

But we know that Shakespeare read other stories in the *Palace of Pleasure*, and it would be strange if he had not read this one before writing a play on the same subject. For same details, trivial enough in themselves, Shakespeare was apparently indebted to Painter, though there is a slight possibility that he read Boaistuau in the original French. (1) In Painter the Friar tells Julietta that the powder's force will continue "forty houres at the least," while in Shakespeare (iv. 1. 105) it is "two and forty hours." Brooke has no such specific reference. (2) Painter says Romeo paid the apothecary fifty ducats for his poison, Shakespeare (v. 1. 59) has forty ducats, but Brooke puts it fifty crowns of gold. These details add something to the natural probability that Shakespeare read Painter's work.

APPENDIX C

THE DUTCH VERSION OF 1634

The Dutch play of *Romeo en Juliette* in alexandrine couplets, was written about 1630 (published 1634) by Jacob Struijs. The argument that this drama is in reality a fairly literal translation of the English play seen by Brooke before 1562 is elsewhere[1] discussed. While it cannot be said that Dr. Fuller's case is, in the light of present evidence, established, yet many considerations make his theory plausible. The summary of the Dutch play which follows is based entirely on the more complete summary of Dr. Fuller in the article referred to.[2]

Table showing Agreements between Shakespeare and Struijs

NOTE. — The table below shows the scenes in Struijs's play that correspond to scenes in Shakespeare. Scenes in Struijs not having correspondence with any part of Shakespeare are bracketed. The table is based entirely on Fuller's summary of Struijs.

SHAKESPEARE.	STRUIJS.
Prologue.	Prologue.
i. 1. 1–165.	. .
166–244.	i. 1.
2. 1–33.	i. 4.
34–106.	. .
3.	. .
4.	. .
5.	i. 1.
ii. 1.	. .
2.	i. 2.
3.	i. 3.

[1] Introduction, "Sources of the Plot."
[2] *Modern Philology*, iv, 100–7 (1906).

Shakespeare	Struijs
4.	. .
5.	. .
6.	i. 5.
. .	[ii. 1, ii. 2, ii. 3.]
iii. 1. 1–141.	ii. 4.
142–202.	iii. 1.
2.	iii. 2.
3.	iii. 3.
4.	iv. 2.
5. 1–64.	iv. 1.
. . . .	[iv. 3.]
65–242	iv. 4.
iv. 1.	iv. 5.
2.	iv. 6.
3.	v. 1.
4.	. .
5.	v. 2.
. .	[v. 3.]
v. 1.	v. 4.
2.	v. 5.
3.	v. 6.

Struijs's Play Summarized

Act i. Scene 1 corresponds to some extent to Shakespeare, **i. 1.** 166 ff. Romeo, depressed, acknowledges to Phebidas (= Mercutio) that he is engaged in a hopeless love. He then recounts the story of his first meeting with Juliette at a banquet in Capellets' house, to which he went masked, adding that she pressed his hand during the evening with amorous sighs. Realizing the impossibility of any marriage between the two hostile houses, he is nevertheless overcome with passion, and walks by Juliette's house each night, hoping for an opportunity to address her. Phebidas, seeing the futility of protest, wishes his friend well.

The second scene corresponds to Shakespeare, ii. 2. Romeus under Juliet's window exclaims:

"Oh that the blessed window would once open, behind which my goddess lies in sweetest slumber! Through its opening streaming, my bright sun could requicken this half-dead soul of mine. O my dear love, knowest thou not my passion? Doth thy heart's blood not violently keep time with mine? Methinks that, were

my lady in such plight, I should a witness of it have within me. O heavens! what do I see? A light in my lady's room begins to burn; my heart thrills and bounds from fear and joy. Oh, might I once accost my goddess on this spot, then were the burden lifted from my heart. Soft! let me listen to what she says.

"[*Juliette leans out of the window.*]

"*Jul.* What troubled voice laments below me here? Who is it here goes prowling alone in the darkness and breaks my light sleep? Ah, by the moon's light I now see Romeo sheltered, 'neath my window standing."[1]

The remaining incidents of the scene follow as in Shakespeare and Romeo goes away to Friar Lourens to arrange for the marriage. The Friar in the next scene, just as in Shakespeare, ii. 3, soliloquizes for about twenty lines[2] until interrupted by the arrival of Romeo. He reluctantly consents to wed the pair next day. Scene 4 discovers Capellets, Thibout, and Paris discussing the feud, especially Romeo's intrusion at the banquet.

"*Thibout.* Alas! friend Paris, it was the greatest agony for me not to chastise his impudence on the spot; my blood boiled from top to toe. And if it had not been for dishonoring the company I would have split his head in two before the eyes of all.

"*Capellets.* It is better that you did not so.

"*Paris.* There would have been little honor in it, too.

"*Thibout.* Be it shame or honor, I say it here, and I swear it, that I shall be Romeo's undoing the very next time I meet him; or, if not, then he shall make me greet the dust.

"*Capellets.* Pardon his youth.

"*Paris.* He hath done little that is wrong.

"*Thibout.* No, my friend, not you nor anyone shall talk me out of this.

"*Capellets.* Be better advised."[3]

For some time they continue to converse on kindred subjects, Juliet entering meanwhile to obtain her father's permission to attend confession. Then, as the closing scene of the act, follows the wedding of the two lovers acted in pantomime.

Act ii. opens with a monologue by Paris, professing his love for Juliette. Scene 2 contains the visit of Romeo to his wife's cham-

[1] Fuller, *op. cit.*, pp. 7–8. Cf. ii. 2. 2 ff.
[2] Fuller's translation will be found in a note to ii. 3. 1.
[3] Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 10. Cf. i. 5. 56 ff.

her on the wedding night. Scene 3 prepares for the conflict between the Capellets and the Montesches, Paris trying in vain to quell the spirits of his own party. In the following scene Phebidas and a party of Montesches after an evening of pleasure, are attacked by the Capellets under Thibout. Romeo enters just in time to see Phebidas killed by Thibout. He tries to separate the combatants, but is forced to fight, and ends by slaying Thibout.

Act iii. opens with the judgment of Romeo's perpetual banishment from Verona. The next scene may be compared with Shakespeare, iii. 2, beginning with Juliette's lament for Thibout and denunciation of Romeo, followed by her repentance, and closing with the Nurse's going out to meet Romeo in the Friar's cell. The arrangement of the succeeding scene is almost identical with Shakespeare, iii. 3. Romeo at the cell of Lourens is raving over the news of his banishment, denouncing Fortune, and longing for death. The Friar, unable to calm him, is alarmed by a knock at the door. It comes from the Nurse, who reports Juliette in the same lamentable state as Romeo,[1] and the latter promises to visit his wife that night despite the Friar's opposition on account of the danger involved.

Act iv. Scene 1, like the first part of iii. 5 in Shakespeare, shows the lovers' last meeting in Juliette's chamber. Romeo refuses to let his wife accompany him as a page to Mantua, and they sorrowfully part. Next Paris comes forward to tell us that Juliette has been promised to him, and Romeo in another monologue bids farewell to Verona. Scene 4, Capellets expresses his indignation at Juliette's declining to obey his will, and threatens her with disinheritance if she persists. Then Lourens, in conversation with Juliette, proposes the sleeping potion as a means to escape the second marriage, and she consents to take it. The closing scene of the act, resembling Shakespeare, iv. 2, shows elaborate preparations for the wedding, amidst which the father sends word to Paris that Juliette is now willing for the match. Paris, delighted, comes to visit her.

Act v. Scene 1. Juliette dismisses the Nurse in order to take the sleeping potion, after the Nurse has advised her to go ahead and marry Paris. But the girl is overcome by fear. The ghost of Thibout appears, rebukes her for secretly wedding his enemy, and foretells her death. Juliette, calling upon Romeo, drinks off the potion. The next scene corresponds to Shakespeare, iv. 5. The

[1] Cf note on iii. 3. 71 ff.

Nurse, attempting to wake Juliette, finds her apparently dead. Friends come in and lament her, a physician pronounces the death due to melancholy. In Scene 3, Friar Lourens delivers to Anselmus a letter for Romeo at Mantua. Romeo, in the following scene, learning from Pedro of Juliette's death, utters a long lament, and departs in search of poison. Anselmus announces in a monologue that through delay he has missed Romeo. "Then, in the final scene, we see Romeo in the act of forcing an entrance to Juliette's tomb. Pedro, meanwhile, afraid of seeing spooks, has withdrawn a little way, in hopes of falling asleep and of thereby dispelling his fears. In the tomb Romeo addresses tender words to Juliette, and after kissing her many times, and after begging forgiveness of Thibout's body, he drinks the poison, commends his soul to God, and dies. Juliette then awakes, but, finding her lord dead, she stabs herself with his sword. At this point Friar Lourens enters; he wakes up Pedro and from him learns of Romeo's mistake. In utter despair he bids Pedro tell the parents of the lovers what a dreadful misfortune this feud has led to; expresses the wish that peace may now reign between the two families; and resolves herewith to retire to some solitary place, because he feels partially guilty for this tragedy" (Fuller).

APPENDIX D. METRE

I. Shakespeare's General Usage

Shakespeare's dramas in general are said to be written in poetry, but a certain proportion of each play is prose. As a rule, when Shakespeare uses prose, the subject-matter is not serious. Clowns, servants, and people held to be of low social rank, employ

Prose.

prose throughout the plays. So in *Romeo and Juliet* we should expect the quarrelsome servants in i. 1, Potpan and his fellows in i. 5, Peter and the musicians in iv. 5, to speak in prose. In the same class fall also most of the Nurse's speeches, though sometimes, following a well-established contemporary dramatic convention, her vehicle is a type of crude blank verse. Mercutio, speaking in i. 4, utters his fancies in lines of rare poetry, but the mere chaff of his jesting in ii. 4, and the opening of iii. 1, is rightly conveyed in plain prose. When one discovers a prose passage in the drama, justification for its use can be found in the content of the speeches.

All of Shakespeare's dramas likewise contain a certain number of rhymed verses. Particular cases of rhyme require different explanations. His earlier works show a greater proportion of rhymed lines than do his later, because the rhymed couplet was the conventional metre of the English drama immediately before

Rhyme.

Shakespeare, just as it was in the later drama of Dryden and Congreve. In his first plays, then, Shakespeare made large use of the couplet, gradually discarding it as he went on writing. But two special uses of the couplet are found even in the latest plays: one or two couplets forming a "rhyme-tag," as in v. 1. 85–6, served to put the audience on notice that the scene was terminated; and sententious observations, like those of the Friar, ii. 3. 1–30, are given more point in rhyme than in blank verse. Moreover, the lighter, lyrical touch of some passages is better brought out in rhyme than in the more stately and dignified blank verse. Thus the rhyming sonnet-structure of the dialogue between Romeo and Juliet, i. 5. 94–112, befits the occasion.

But the normal metre of all Shakespeare's plays is blank verse, —that is to say, each line contains five dissyllabic feet, with the stress on the second syllable of the foot, and the lines are unrhymed. Thus the accent falls regularly on the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and tenth syllables of the line, and every two syllables compose a foot. A typical line may be scanned :

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

He jests′ | at scars′ || that nev′- | er felt′ | a wound′. |

Blank Verse : Type.

The pause after the second foot (" at scars "), it will be noticed, is just a little longer than any other until the end of the line is reached. This mid-line pause is called the *cæsura*, and generally can be found after the second or the third foot. The pause at the close of the line, which is usually stronger than the *cæsura*, is known as the *end-pause*. The scansion of English verse depends chiefly on the accentuation of individual words and on the sense of the complete lines.

Elizabethan Pronunciation.

Difficulties met with in the scansion of many lines are due to the ignorance of the pronunciation of particular words in Elizabethan English. To an American such difficulties are increased because of the differences between his own countrymen and the English in pronouncing words that are spelled alike by both. It must be remembered that in the past three centuries English spelling has changed far less than English pronunciation. Much of Shakespeare, enunciated as it must have been in his own day, would sound strange to our ears.

In most words at the present time usage has fixed the accent on one syllable, so that the word is never accented differently by careful speakers. But in Elizabethan times much more latitude was permissible, and a poet could adopt either pronunciation of a word that suited his metrical scheme. For example, to-day we make a clear distinction in meaning between the two verbs, *con′jure* and *conjure′*, but Shakespeare in this play uses *con′jure* (ii. 1. 6 and ii. 1. 29) in the modern sense of *conjure′*, while (ii. 1. 26) he has *conjured′* in exactly the same sense. The accentuation of a given word thus depends largely on its position in the line. For pronouncing adjectives a convenient rule is that stated by Schmidt (*Shakespeare Lexicon*, vol. ii. Appendix), that where an adjective precedes a monosyllabic noun, or a noun accented on the first syllable, the adjective is not to be accented on the last syllable.

Shortening and Lengthening Words.

Some words through contraction or slurring, not indicated in the text, lose one or two syllables. *Towards* (i. 1. 131) and *warrant* (iv. 5. 1) are probably to be treated as monosyllables. Contraction of two hastily pronounced words probably explains i. 5. 27; thus:

> You're wel' | come gen' | t'l'men! Come', | musi'- | cians, play'!

In certain words having a very light syllable, this syllable may be either slurred over or brought out strongly. The two names, *Romeo* and *Juliet*, are each generally dissyllabic, but each one appears as a trisyllable in some lines of the play. Line ii. 6. 9, contains both *vi'-o-lent'* and *vi'-olent*, pronounced in three syllables and two syllables respectively.

Between two vowels, *th*, *v*, *w*, and *h* are frequently dropped, and the vowels coalesce in one syllable. So such words as *heaven*, *devil*, *ever*, *either*, may be taken as having one syllable or two, according to the demands of the metre. By similar vowel coalescence *fire*, *friar*, and *hour* are usually treated as monosyllabic, though *friar* is dissyllabic in v. 3. 187. Words ending in *-ion*, *-ius*, or *-ious* generally have a fixed pronunciation for us. In Shakespeare's day these suffixes were treated as one syllable or as two indifferently. So the word *division* (iii. 5. 29) was pronounced in four syllables though we never allow it more than three. Similarly the *-ed* of the past participle in many verbs might be made into a separate syllable or not according to rhythmic exigencies.

A converse lengthening process developed extra syllables occasionally. Between the liquids *l*, *m*, *n*, *r*, and another consonant, an intermediate vowel sound sometimes appeared. *Entrance* in i. 4. 8 is to be pronounced *enterance* though it has only two syllables in v. 3. 141. One must not expect either the contraction or the lengthening to be marked in the printing of the text.

Variety.

But much of the seeming irregularity of Shakespeare's verse is undoubtedly due to a deliberate intention on his part to introduce variety. Every reader of Pope's poetry, owing to the ceaseless regularity of its rhythmic beat, must feel the monotony of the measure. Pope's aim was to be "a correct poet," and as a rule no alteration can make his lines metrically smoother. But Shakespeare would not be bound by every petty rule of the strict prosodist, and his poetry is more natural, more flexible, and more genuinely rhythmical on that account.

Syllables.

Sometimes this variety is gained in the insertion of an extra unstressed syllable, which is to be hurried over in the reading of the line. This may appear at the *cæsura*:

But thou′ | slew'st Tyb′ (alt); ‖ there′ art | thou hap′ | py too′ (iii. 3. 138).

It is more common, however, at the end of the line, forming what is technically called the "feminine ending."

And there′ | an end′. | But what′ | say you′ | to Thurs′(day)? (iii. 4. 28).

Conversely, an unstressed half-foot is sometimes omitted immediately after a pause. The pause really makes up for the omitted syllable.

∧ Nurse′! | ∧ Wife′! | What, ho′! | What, nurse,′ | I say′ (iv. 4. 23).

Stress.

A more frequent device of the poet to avoid monotony is to vary his stress. Sometimes the accent is to be placed on the first syllable, instead of the second, in one or more of the feet.

1st. Turn′ thee, | Benvo′ | lio, look′ | upon′ | thy death′ (i. 1. 74).
1st and 3d. Love′ is | a smoke′ ‖ raised′ with | the fume′ | of sighs′ (i. 1. 196).

Stress inversion occurs most frequently in the first foot, and somewhat less frequently, immediately after the *cæsura*.

Many lines have in certain feet weak stresses substituted for the usual strong stress.

Togeth′ | er with` | the ter′ | ror of` | the place′ (iv. 3. 38).

Occasionally such weak stresses are balanced by two long stresses in an adjoining foot:

Add′ing | to clouds′ | more′ clouds′ | with` his | deep′ sighs′ (i. 1. 139).

Pauses.

Again variety may be gained by the shifting of pauses, *i. e.* the *cæsura* or the end-line pause. Thus the shift of *cæsura* from its regular position is exemplified:

What said my man, When my betossed soul
Did not attend him as we rode? ‖ I think (v. 3. 76–7).

When the end-pause is lacking, we have what is known as the *run-on* or *unstopped* line, common in the latest of Shake-

speare's plays, such as *The Tempest* and *Coriolanus*, but more common still in the dramas of Beaumont and Fletcher. *Romeo and Juliet*, being an early play, contains only a few such verses:

I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me? (iv. 3. 31–2).

The final variation to be mentioned is the breaking up of lines by means of the dialogue. Thus a line seemingly incomplete becomes metrically perfect when scanned in connection with the preceding or the following line; *e. g.*

Lines Broken. *Rom.* Good mor' | row fa' | ther.
Fr. L. Ben' | edic' | ite' (ii. 3. 31).

Sometimes part of a line appears to do double duty, serving to fill out the preceding line and the succeeding one as well. This phenomenon Abbott calls the "amphibious section."

Jul. To-mor | row will | I send. |
Rom. So thrive | my soul —
Jul. A thou | sand times | good night! (ii. 2. 154–5).

Occasionally broken lines seem to contain six feet, or even more, but perhaps the extra foot, being parenthetical, is to be left out of account. Professor E. K. Chambers suggests that the extra words may be pronounced simultaneously with others.

Jul. I do | beseech | thee —
Nurse. Mad | am!
Jul. By- | and-by | I come (ii. 2. 151–2).

Irregularities.

But even after all these explanations are made to cover accentuation, contraction, lengthening, shift of stress and pauses, there remain a certain number of lines which cannot be classed as pentameter verse. Sometimes lines have been left incomplete for the dramatic effect. For example, the last line of iv. 4, just before the discovery of the apparently lifeless body of Juliet is Capulet's order to the Nurse to awaken the bride:

Make haste, | I say. | — | — | — |

The abrupt termination is intentional.

On the other hand, Shakespeare's plays, like Pope's poetry, contain a certain small number of six-foot verses, or *alexandrines*. Concerning these one should be slow to dogmatize. Contraction,

elision, and slurring may remove mountains. An apparent hexameter line is spoken by Juliet, ii. 2. 42, where the context implies no hasty utterance:

Belong | ing to | a man. | O be | some oth | er name!

Some incomplete or hypermetrical lines may be due to corruption of the text, an explanation that seems to apply to ii. 5. 15–7 of this play.

The reader, however, must guard against the assumption that there can be one and only one way to scan a line. Often one is guided by personal taste or preference to choose this method of scansion rather than that one, and he cannot be sure that the same consideration will appeal with equal force to a second reader. Many lines of classic English poetry may not yield readily to rules of thumb in disclosing their metrical make-up; but if one takes proper account of pauses, ejaculations, and parenthetical words of address, the rhythm is likely to take care of itself.

II. The Metre of *Romeo and Juliet*.

In general, *Romeo and Juliet* presents no unusual metrical difficulties, for the rhythm as a whole is notably regular. The play contains a small proportion of prose lines, and a fair amount of rhyme, arranged both alternately and in couplets. Its most marked distinction metrically is the number of lyric measures to be found therein. Particularly the sonnet form is employed several times. The Prologue of the play, the Prologue to Act ii, and i. 5. 95–108, form complete Shakespearian sonnets; while i. 2. 46–51, i. 2. 93–8, v. 3. 12–7, and v. 3. 305–10, are *sestettes* in verse structure. All this argues a special interest on Shakespeare's part in this form of verse during his composition of this tragedy. Other lyric measures in the play are something close akin to the *epithalamium*, or marriage hymn, in iii. 2. 1-31, and a suggestion of the *aubade*, or dawn-song, in iii. 5. 1 ff. Such lyric notes are of course in thorough harmony with the general tone of the story. In the 3002 lines printed in Q 2 of *Romeo and Juliet*, 405 lines of prose[1] have been counted, 2111 lines

Rhyme in Play.

[1] The figures given here and in the table below are based chiefly on Furnivall's discussion of the subject in his Introduction to the *Leopold Shakspere*. But the percentage of run-on lines in *Romeo and Juliet* is approximated from an independent count.

of blank verse, and 486 rhymed pentameter lines, or a percentage of rhyme equalling 18.7.

It has already been stated that a large proportion of rhyme in a Shakespearian play is one mark of early composition. For example, *Love's Labour's Lost*, one of Shakespeare's first plays, has a rhyme percentage of 63.2, while *The Tempest*, perhaps his last play, reaches the percentage of only 0.1. Had we, then, no other evidence on the question, we should be inclined to call *Romeo and Juliet* an early play. But several other metrical tests throw light on its date. One of these tests is that of "feminine endings," another of "run-on lines," and a third of "light or weak endings." By a feminine ending is meant the ending of a line where an extra half-foot occurs after the regular pentameter. Thus:

Metrical Tests for Date.

Receive in either by this dear encount | er.

Shakespeare's later works contain many more feminine endings than do his earlier ones. By a run-on, or unstopped, line is meant one in which there is no sense-pause at the end of the line. The run-on lines increase rapidly as Shakespeare continues to write. A light ending verse is one not feminine that ends with an auxiliary or some similar word which cannot be emphasized in the reading; such are: *am*, *he*, *I*, *since*. A weak ending is one where the stress is even less; conjunctions and prepositions, like *and*, *as*, *at*, *by*, *nor*, placed at the ends of lines, form weak endings. Now a table of comparison on these points between the three plays mentioned shows:

Name of play	Percentage of fem. endings	Percentage of run-on lines	No. of light endings	No. of weak endings
Romeo and Juliet	7.26	12.7	6	1
Love's Labour's Lost	4.	5.2	3	0
The Tempest	32.	24.8	42	25

While one cannot rely on these tests absolutely, but must use them to confirm other and weightier evidence, they are helpful in making clear the relative chronological positions of many plays. In this case they confirm the placing of *Romeo and Juliet* as one of the early plays, though later than *Love's Labour's Lost*.

Below are listed several lines which may be difficult at first to scan properly. Most of them will be observed to be speeches of the Nurse, whose rudely formed blank verse requires frequent

contractions, particularly of prepositional phrases and auxiliary verbs.

1. (i. 3. 4) God\ for\ | bid′! Where's′ | this girl′? | What, Ju-′ | liet′!

or possibly,

God′ for | bid′! ∧ | ∧ Where 's′ | this girl′? | What Ju′(liet).

2. (i. 3, 13) And yet′ | to‿my teen′ | be‿it spok(e)n′ | I have′ | but four′.
3. (i. 3. 17) Come Lam′ | mas-eve′ | at night′ | shall‿she‿be′ | fourteen′.
4. (i. 3. 25) Of all′ | the days′ | o' the year′ | upon′ | that day′.
5. (i. 3. 27) Sit′ting | i' the sun′ | un′der | the dove′- | house wall′!
6. (i. 3. 36) For then′ | she‿could stand′ | alone′; | nay′, by | the rood′.
7. (i. 5. 18) Wel′come, | gentl′(e)men! | la′dies | that have′ | their toes′.
8. (ii. 5. 51) My back′ | o' t' oth(e)r′ | side, — O,′ | my back′, | my back′!
9. (iii. 2. 87) ∧All′ | forsworn′, | all naught′, | all′ dis | sem′(blers).
10. (iii. 5. 178) ∧Day′, | ∧night′, | ∧hour′, | tide,\ time\, | work\, play\.
11. (iv. 5. 1) Mis′tress! | what, mis′ | tress! Ju′ | liet! fast.′ | warr(a)nt′ | her, she′.

No. 11 appears to be an alexandrine.

GLOSSARY

a' (i. 3. 40), he; a corruption of the pronoun.

affray (iii. 5. 33), frighten, make afraid. Anglo-Fr. *afrayer, effrayer;* late Lat. *exfridare,* disturb < *ex,* out of, + *fridus,* peace.

against (iii. 4. 32; iv. 1. 113), before, in expectation of the time when. Cf. *Hamlet,* i. 1. 158: "ever 'gainst that season comes."

ambuscado (i. 4. 84), ambuscade. "An affected refashioning of ambuscade after Sp. Here Englishmen may have confused the Sp. pa. pple. *emboscado,* ambushed . . . with the fem. sb. *emboscada,* ambuscade" (*N. E. Dict.*).

amerce (iii. 1. 195), punish by fining, mulct. A. Fr. *amercier,* fine, < *à,* to, + *merci,* mercy.

an, or **an if** (i. 1. 4, etc.; v. 1. 50), if. Spelled *and* in Elizabethan Eng., but in modern spelling distinguished from the copula, from which it is probably derived.

apt (iii. 1. 34; iii. 3. 157), ready, inclined. Cf. *Julius Cæsar,* iii. 1. 160: "Live a thousand years, I shall not find myself so apt to die."

atomy (i. 4. 57), tiny being, mite. Lat. *atomi,* (pl. of *atomus,* an atom) was treated as an English singular. Cf. *As You Like It,* iii. 5. 13: "The frail'st and softest things, Who shut their coward gates on atomies."

bandy (ii. 5. 14), beat to and fro as a tennis ball. Derivation uncertain but connected with Fr. *bander,* which has the same meaning.

beetle-brows (i. 4. 32), bushy or prominent eyebrows. See discussion of word in *N. E. Dict.*

behoveful (iv. 3. 8), suitable, required.

beshrew (ii. 5. 52; iii. 5. 223, 229), curse; a mild imprecation.

bill (i. 1. 80), "A kind of pike or halbert, formerly carried by the English infantry, and afterwards the usual weapon of watchmen" (Nares). A. S. *bil,* a sword.

butt-shaft (ii. 4. 16), an unbarbed arrow used in shooting at butts. Cupid's arrow was supposed not to be barbed.

canker (ii. 3. 30), a canker-worm, living on the buds and leaves of plants. Thus in *Two Gentlemen of Verona,*

i. 1. 43: "In the sweetest bud The eating canker dwells." < O. Fr. *cancre, chancre* < Lat. *cancrum* (nom. *cancer*). So **canker'd** (i. 1. 102) means (1) eaten away, rusted, corroded; and then, (2) like a cancer, malignant.

chapless (iv. 1. 83), without a chap, or lower jaw, as in *Hamlet*, v. 1. 97: "Chapless and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade."

cheerly (i. 5. 16), cheerfully, gladly; a cry of encouragement used particularly by sailors.

cheveril (ii. 4. 87), kid leather, proverbial for its flexibility. M. E. *chevrelle* < O. Fr. *chevrele*, kid, — diminutive of *chèvre* < Lat. *capra*, goat.

chop-logic (iii. 5. 150), a person who chops logic, hence a sophistical debater. *N. E. Dict.* quotes Awdelay (1561): "Choplogyke is he that when his mayster rebuketh him of hys fault, he wyll geve hym XX wordes for one."

conceit (ii. 6. 30; iv. 3. 37), something conceived in the mind, imagination.

conduct (iii. 1. 129; v. 3. 116), conductor, guide. Cf. *Richard III*, i. 1. 45: "Hath appointed This conduct to convey me to the Tower."

conjuration (v. 3. 68), adjuration. So *Henry V*, i. 2. 29: "We charge you, in the name of God, take heed. . . . Under this conjuration speak, my Lord."

cot-quean (iv. 4. 6), a man doing household work or busying himself with women's affairs. Probably < *cot*, cottage, + *quean*, A. S. *cwēn*, woman.

countervail (ii. 6. 4), be of equal value to. < O. Fr. *contrevaloir*, < Lat. *contrā*, against, + *valēre*, be of worth.

date (i. 4. 3, 108; v. 3. 229), duration, term of existence. So *Titus Andronicus*, i. 1. 168: "Outlive thy father's days, And fame's eternal date." Hence **dateless** (v. 3. 115), without limit of time, eternal.

digressing (iii. 3. 127), deviating, departing, as in *Taming of the Shrew*, iii. 2. 109: "I am come to keep my word, Though in some part enforced to digress."

distemperature (ii. 3. 40), mental or physical disorder, as in *Pericles*, v. 1. 27: "Upon what ground is this distemperature?" Hence, **distemper'd** (ii. 3. 33), disordered.

dowdy (ii. 4. 43), slattern.

dry-beat (iii. 1. 82; iv. 5. 126), beat soundly; so *Pappe with an Hatchet* (1589): "A yonger brother, that means to drie beate those of the Elder house."

endart (i. 3. 98), thrust or dart in, from the figure of an arrow.

enpierced (i. 4. 19), pierced, wounded; sometimes spelled *impierced*.

envious (i. 1. 157; iii. 1. 173; iii. 2. 40), malignant, ma-

licious, as frequently in Shakespeare. In ii. 2. 4, 7 the word has its modern sense of "jealous."

fantastico (ii. 4. 30), a fantastical, eccentric person. The only other instance of the word cited by editors is that by Steevens from Dekker's *Old Fortunatus:* "I haue reveld with kings, daunced with Queenes, dallied with Ladies, worne straunge attires, . . . seene fantasticoes, conuerst with humorists." It. *fantastico.*

fashion-monger (ii. 4. 35), one who affects the newest fashions, fop. Cf. Marston, *Scourge of Villanie* (1598): "Each quaint fashion-monger whose sole repute Rests in his trim gay clothes."

fee-simple (iii. 1. 35), absolute possession. < Anglo-Lat. *feodum simplex*, absolute property.

fettle (iii. 5. 154), prepare, make ready. Possibly < A. S. *fetel*, a chain, a band.

flecked (ii. 3. 3), dappled, spotted. Langland in *Piers Ploughman* speaks of "foules, with flekked fetheres."

fleer (i. 5. 59), laugh scornfully, sneer. So *Much Ado about Nothing*, v. 1. 58: "Never fleer and jest at me." Etymology uncertain but probably connected with Norw., Sw. *flira*, Dan. *flire*, grin.

flirt-gill (ii. 4. 162), woman of loose behavior. Cf. Beaumont and Fletcher, *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, iv. 1: "You heard him take me up like a flirt-gill, and sing bawdy songs upon me." < *flirt* + *gill*, a girl, a jill, abbrev. of *gillian* < *Juliana*, < Lat. *Juliana*, prop. name.

fond (iii. 3. 52; iv. 5. 82), foolish, as in *King Lear*, iv. 7. 60: "I am a very foolish, fond old man." M. E. *fond, fonned*, pple. of *fonnen*, act as a fool, possibly < O. Fries. *fonne*, > Sw. *fåne*, fool.

ghostly (ii. 2. 189; ii. 3. 45), spiritual. In Shakespeare the word always has this sense.

gossamer (ii 6. 18), fine threads of a spider's silk floating in the air. M. E. *gos(e)somer(e)*, probably < *gōs*, goose + *somer*, summer. See *N. E. Dict.* for further note on word.

haviour (ii. 2. 99), deportment, bearing, behavior. < Fr. *aveir, avoir*, to have. The initial *h-* was introduced later from association with the English form of the verb. Not a clipped form of *behavior*, which comes from the verb *behave*, and has a separate history.

hilding (ii. 4. 44; iii. 5. 169), a base, worthless man or woman. Etymology uncertain; possibly < A. S. *hinderling* < *hinder*, behind, + *-ling*.

hind (i. 1. 73), menial, servant. < M. E. sg. *hine*, A. S. pl. *hīne*, apparently from gen. pl. *hīna* of *hīgan, hīwan*, members of a house-

hold, domestics. So *N. E. Dict.*

humour (i. 1. 135, 147; ii. 1. 7), whim, caprice. In this sense the word is extremely common in late Elizabethan literature. Thus arose the "comedy of humours," in which the fun is derived from the peculiar whim governing each character.

Jack (ii. 4. 160; iii. 1. 12), a fellow, a knave. So *Richard III*, i. 3. 72: "Since every Jack became a gentleman, There 's many a gentle person made a Jack."

jealous-hood (iv. 4. 13), perhaps jealousy, and so, using the abstract for the concrete, a jealous woman. *N. E. Dict.* suggests that we have here two words, *hood* referring to the type of female head or the hood of a spy, A. S. *hōd;* others explain as the regular suffix < A. S. *hād*, condition, as in *manhood, womanhood.*

joint-stools (i. 5. 7), jointed stools, folding chairs. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 269: "jumps upon join'd stools and swears with a good grade."

learn (iii. 2. 12; iv. 2. 17), teach, as frequently in Shakespeare, and still heard now.

loggerhead (iv. 4. 20) blockhead, stupid person. The first part of the word, according to *N. E. Dict.*, was apparently "invented as expressing by its sound the notion of something heavy and clumsy."

mammet (iii. 5. 186), doll, puppet, baby. Contracted from *Mahomet* > *Maumet, Mawmet*, which came to signify an idol because mediæval Christians believed that the Mohammedans were idolaters. See Greenough and Kittredge, *Words and their Ways*, p. 377.

marchpane (i. 5. 9), a cake containing pounded almonds and sugar. Nares gives a recipe for the baking of one. Probably < Lat. *Martius*, of Mars, "having towers, castles and such like on them," + *panis*, bread, through O. Fr. *marcepain.*

marry (i. 3. 63; iv. 5. 8), a common Elizabethan ejaculation, probably derived from the name of the Virgin.

measure (i. 4. 10; i. 5. 52), a slow, stately dance, as in *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 80: "Mannerly — modest, as a measure, full of state and ancientry."

minim (ii. 4. 22), in music, the old name for a half-note; hence **minim rest**, a half-rest.

minion (iii. 5. 152), one made pert by too much petting, as in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, i. 2. 92: "You, minion, are too saucy." Originally, a loved one, a darling, Fr. *mignon.*

misadventure (v. 1. 29; v. 3. 188), ill adventure, mischance, misfortune. So **misadventured** (Prol. 7), unfortunate. Neither word is used again by Shakespeare.

mistemper'd (i. 1. 94), un-

natural, *i. e.*, not tempered for use in "civil brawls."

mis-sheathed (v. 3. 205), ill sheathed, placed in the wrong scabbard.

mouse-hunt (iv. 4. 11), obviously, a woman-hunter, but whether derived from the use of mouse as a term of endearment for a woman, or figuratively from a word denoting a weasel, a stoat, is uncertain. See Furness for notes of various commentators on the passage.

nice (iii. 1. 159; v. 2. 18), trifling, unimportant, as in *Richard III*, iii. 7. 175: "The respects thereof are nice and trivial." The original sense of the word was foolish; then, foolishly particular as to trifles. O. Fr. *nice* < Lat. *nescius*, ignorant.

o'er-perch (ii. 2. 66), fly over. Used by Shakespeare nowhere else.

partisan (i. 1. 80, 101), "a military weapon used . . . by footmen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, consisting of a long-handled spear, the blade having one or more lateral cutting projections, variously shaped, so as sometimes to pass into the gisarme and the halberd" (*N. E. Dict.*).

pilcher (iii. 1. 84), probably the leather scabbard of a sword, though no other instance of the word in that sense is known; related to *pilch*, a gown of skin or fur, < A. S. *pylece*, < L. Lat. *pellicea*, fem. sing. of *pelliceus*, of skin, < *pellis*, skin.

present (iv. 1. 61; v. 1. 51), immediate, instant, as frequently in Shakespeare. So **presently** (v. 1. 21), immediately.

prick-song (ii. 4. 21), written music in distinction from *plain song*. "The first notes used were small, square marks without stems, called pricks, or points" (Clarke's *Dictionary of Musical Terms*).

princox (i. 5. 88), a pert youth, a coxcomb, < *prim* + *cock*; *princock* is another form of the word.

properer (ii. 4. 217), better-looking, handsomer; cf. *As You Like It*, iii. 5. 51: "You are a thousand times a properer man."

reeky (iv. 1. 83), "reeking with malodorous vapors; strictly smoky, and hence foul" (Dowden).

ropery (ii. 4. 154), roguery, rascality. *Roperipe* in Elizabethan English signified ripe for a rope, worthy of hanging. *Roper* meant a *roperipe* person. Dowden cites Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Chances*, iii. 1: "You 'll leave this ropery When you come to my years."

runagate (iii. 5. 90), vagabond; a corruption of M. E. *renegate*, an apostate, a renegade (due according to Skeat to popular etymology with *runne a gate*, run on the road) < O. Fr. *renegat* < Low Lat. *renegatus*, pa. ppl. of *renegare* < *re-*, again + *negare*, deny.

skains-mate (ii. 4. 162), prob-

ably "cut-throat companion" (Malone, Steevens), male ruffian. *N. E. Dict.* can throw no light on its derivation or meaning.

slop (ii. 4. 47), a form of loose trousers affected in the sixteenth century. So *2 Henry IV*, i. 2. 34, "about the satin for my short cloak and my slops." Cf. O. Norse *sloppr*, a long, loose gown < *sleppa*, to slip.

solemnity (i. 5. 59, 65; iv. 5. 61), a stately ceremony, festivity, often referring to a marriage feast; as in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 1. 11: "the night Of our solemnities."

spite (ii. 1. 27), mortification, vexation. So *Hamlet*, i. 5. 189: "The time is out of joint: O cursed spite, That ever I was born to set it right!" In neither instance does the word carry the sense of personal malevolence, malice, that it bears to-day. Hence, in spite of (i. 1. 85; i. 5. 64), for the purpose of mortifying or vexing.

still (i. 1. 177; ii. 3. 27; iv. 3. 29) ever, always, as frequently in Shakespeare. Cf. *Macbeth*, v. 5. 2: "The cry is still 'They come.'"

store (i. 2. 22), large number, abundance.

sweeting (ii. 4. 83), a kind of apple, called also bitter-sweet.

tassel-gentle (ii. 2. 160), tercel-gentle, the male hawk, used in falconry. M. E. *tercel, tercelet*, O. Fr. *tiercel* < Late Lat. *tertiolus*, diminutive of Lat. *tertius*, third. So called either because the male hawk was supposed to be a third larger than the female, or because it was supposed that every third bird in the nest was a male. The *tassel-gentle* and the *falcon-gentle*, so termed because of their "familiar, courteous disposition," were commonly appropriated to the prince in his hunting.

teen (i. 3. 13), sorrow, as *Complaint of Venus*, 808: "My face is full of shame, my heart of teen." M. E. *tene*, A. S. *tēona*, reproach, < *tēon*, accuse.

tetchy (i. 3. 32), peevish, fretful, < M. E. *tecche, tache*, habit, vice < O. Fr. *teche*, Fr. *tache*, spot, blemish.

trencher (i. 5. 2), a large wooden plate. < O. Fr. *trenchoir*, a carving place < *trencher*, to carve.

truckle-bed (ii. 1. 39), trundle-bed, a bed on wheels which might be pushed under a larger bed.

versal (ii. 4. 219), the Nurse's word for universal; a common vulgarism of the time.

wanton (ii. 2. 178), "a merry rogue, a tomboy" (Schmidt).

ware (i. 1. 131; ii. 2. 103), aware, as in *As You Like It*, ii. 4. 58: "Thou speakest wiser than thou art ware of."

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THE ARDEN SHAKESPEARE

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OTHELLO

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PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

REVISED BY

RAYMOND MACDONALD ALDEN

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH IN
LELAND STANFORD UNIVERSITY

D. C. HEATH AND COMPANY

BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO
ATLANTA SAN FRANCISCO DALLAS
LONDON

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PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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INTRODUCTION

SUMMARY

§ 1. Early performances. § 2. Texts. Comparison of Quarto and Folio. § 3. Date of composition. Character of style and rhythm. § 4. Cinthio's *Hecatommithi*. His story of the Moor of Venice. Summary. The historical background.

§ 5. What attracted Shakespeare in this story. Shakespearean tragedy. Character of the tragic hero. § 6. Application to *Othello*. Cinthio's story provided an opening for Shakespearean tragedy, but itself furnished scarcely the germ of it. § 7. Character of Othello. § 8. The betrayal of Cassio. Cassio's character. § 9. The nature of Othello's love. § 10. The betrayal of Desdemona. §11. From the temptation to the murder. §12. The character of Desdemona. § 13. The character of Iago. § 14. Emilia. § 15. Roderigo. § 16. Minor characters: Brabantio, Gratiano, Lodovico, the Duke and the Senator, Montano, Bianca, the Clown. § 17. Character of the action: its place among Shakespearean tragic plots. "Classical" character of action in Acts ii–v. The First Act and its relation to the sequel. § 18. Bearing of *Othello* upon our knowledge of Shakespeare's mind.

1. LITERARY HISTORY OF THE PLAY

§ 1. The first known performance of *Othello* was given by Shakespeare's company, the king's men, on November 1, 1604, before the Court, in the old Banqueting House at Whitehall.[1] It was from the first popular, and we have a record of two performances before illustrious visitors during Shakespeare's lifetime. On April 30, 1610, Prince Friedrich of Würtemberg, according to his secretary's journal, witnessed *l'histoire du More de Venise* at the Globe, *lieu ordinaire où l'on joue les comédies*. In February, 1613, it was one of the six dramas of Shakespeare played at the wedding festivities of the Princess Elizabeth. We may probably conclude from these data that *Othello* "held the stage continually" during Shakespeare's life (Lee, p. 389).

[1] This is established by the entry in the "Revells Booke" of 1605, a MS. volume covering the entries of 1604–5. The authenticity of this entry was for long uncertain, but is now definitively established. Cf. Lee, *Shakespeare*, p. 388, note.

§ 2. The play remained unpublished, however, till 1622, when one Thomas Walkley issued it in a Quarto edition with the title: The | Tragedy of Othello | The Moore of Venice. *As it hath beene diuerse times acted at the* | Globe, and at the Black-Friers, by | *his Maiesties Seruants.* | *Written by* William Shakespeare. | London. . . .

In the following year the play was printed in the First Folio edition of the entire works. In 1630 a Second Quarto was issued, and in 1655 a Third.

Of these texts the Third Quarto is merely a reprint of the Second, and has no independent value, while the Second represents the First with emendations founded upon the Folio text, which had appeared in the meantime. These "emendations" are sometimes right, but occasionally ignorant or stupid, and clearly have no claim to rest upon a Shakespearean tradition. There remain, therefore, only the First Quarto and the First Folio possessing rank as original sources.

Neither of these texts can be said to have a decisive superiority over the other, though that of the Folio is on the whole preferred. Each presents blunders and omissions not found in the other; each contributes undoubtedly Shakespearean matter which the other omits. A frequent source of difference is (1) in the *oaths*, certainly authentic, and reproduced in the Quarto, but excised, in accordance with the Act of Parliament, in the Folio; this makes probable that the Quarto was printed from a MS. which had long ceased to be used in the theater, and may not be much later than the original performance of the play. Even expressions like *God's will*, *Zounds* (God's wounds), and *by the mass* are omitted or replaced by innocent formulæ like *in troth* in the Folio. All these phrases are, of course, restored from the Quarto in modern texts. (2) The language of the Quarto is in general rather more colloquial and nearer to the actual pronunciation of the time; thus *ha* is often given for *have*, not only where it is slurred, as in

> I *ha* bin to-night exceedingly well cudgelled (ii. 3. 371),

but where it carries a strong emphasis, e.g.

> How poor are they that *ha* not patience! (ii. 3. 375).

The Folio regularly substitutes *have*. Similarly, *bin* for *been*, *has* for *hath*, *ifaith* for *in faith*, and forms like *he'll 't is*, *'t was*, &c., preponderate in the Quarto, the fuller forms in the Folio. The Quarto occasionally uses the colloquial (and archaic) *em* for *them*. The fatal *handkerchief* is regularly given by the Quarto in the colloquial form *handkercher*. But most of the contracted or colloquial forms

also occur in the Folio, and the uncontracted in the Quarto, even when the latter are metrically required, as in iii. 3. 313:

Emilia. Look, here 't is. *Iago.* A good wench; give it me.

So, the Folio used the form *Desdemon*, where strict scansion requires, for the full name; the rather archaic *twiggen* for the Quarto *wicker*, in ii. 3. 152, and the colloquial *mam'ring* (mammering), iii. 3. 72, for the Quarto *muttering*.

(3) In a number of cases the Quarto reading is replaced by one clearly superior in the Folio; in a smaller number of others the Folio reading is inferior. Examples of the first kind are (from a single scene):—

ii. 3. 193, F.

your name is great
In *mouths* of wisest censure. (Q 1, *men.*)

ii. 3. 206, F.

passion having my best judgment *collied.* (Q 1, *cooled.*)

ii. 3. 221, F.

I had rather have this tongue *cut from* my mouth.
(Q 1, *out from*, whence Q 2, *out of.*)

ii. 3. 139, F.

his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio.
(Q 1, *praises.*)

Examples of the second:—

i. 1. 101, Q 1.

Upon malicious *bravery.* (F, *knavery.*)

ii. 1. 267, Q 1.

when these *mutualities* so marshal the way.
(F, *mutabilities.*)

iv. 2. 55, Q.

A fixed figure for the time of scorn
To point his slow *unmoving* finger(s) at!
(F, *and moving.*)

As the last example shows, the Folio and the Quarto may each be more authentic for particular words or phrases in the same passage; thus *finger* (Folio), not *fingers* (Quarto), is clearly right. A striking instance of a passage thus constructed by modern editors from materials furnished by Quarto and Folio, but not itself as a whole found anywhere, is i. 3. 375 (the parting between Iago and Roderigo at the close of the Senate scene). The old texts are here verbally reproduced.

Q 1 has:

Iag. Go to, farewell:—doe you heare *Roderigo?*
Rod. What say you?
Iag. No more of drowning, doe you heare?
Rod. I am chang'd. [*Exit Roderigo.*
Iag. Goe to, farewell, put money enough in your purse:
Thus doe I ever make my foole my purse.

F 1 has:

Iago. Go too, farewel. Do you heare *Roderigo?*
Rod. I'll sell all my land. [*Exit.*
Iago. Thus do I ever make my Foole, my purse.

Q 2, correcting Q 1 by F 1, combines these thus:

Iago. Go to, farewell:—doe you heare *Roderigo?*
Rod. What say you?
Iago. No more of drowning, doe you heare?
Rod. I am chang'd: Ile goe sell all my land. [*Exit.*
Iago. Thus doe I ever make my foole my purse.

This is followed substantially by the Cambridge and other modern editions.

(4) Finally, the Folio contains a number of passages (totalling about one hundred and sixty lines) not found in the Quarto, and the Quarto about a dozen lines in all not found in the Folio. The chief longer passages of the first class are the following:—i. 1. 122–38; i. 2. 72–7; i. 3. 24–30; iii. 3. 383–90; iii. 3. 453–60; iv. 1. 38–44; iv. 2. 151–64; iv. 3. 31–53; iv. 3. 87–104; v. 2. 185–93; *ib.* 266–72.

It is not doubted that all these passages, as well as those peculiar to the Quarto, were written by Shakespeare. But the question arises whether the passages found only in the Folio were parts of the original text omitted in the Quarto, or whether they were Shakespeare's "afterthoughts," which do not appear in the Quarto merely because it reproduces the original MS., in which they did not occur. Dr. A. C. Bradley, to whom the above list is due, has examined all these passages, with a result which permits us to dismiss the second hypothesis.[1] In the great majority of cases the passage is more or less closely bound up with the context; two or three (e.g. Emilia's reflections on husbands, iv. 3. 87 *f.*) are obvious "cuts." Several can only be explained as printer's omissions in the Quarto; only in two or three is insertion by afterthought even conceivable.

The conclusions made probable from the above evidence are that both texts (Q 1 and F 1) were printed from substantially authentic copies of the play. That Q 1 was printed from an early acting

[1] *Shakespearean Tragedy*, Appendix, Note J.

version, with some cuts and blunders, aggravated by careless printing, but here and there preserving an authentic phrase of which the tradition would otherwise have been lost. That F 1 was printed from a MS. much nearer, on the whole, to the author's text, restoring most of the "cuts," but here and there itself slightly curtailed, and in a number of cases "corrected" without authority, and for the worse. Whether its somewhat more modern and "literary" English is a restoration of Shakespeare's writing, or regulation of it by the fashions of 1623, must be left uncertain.

§ 3. The well-authenticated date of the first performance of *Othello* (November 1, 1604) probably followed its completion by a few months at most. In time sequence, as well as in tragic character, it forms a group with *Hamlet*, which certainly preceded (Q 1, 1603; Q 2, 1604), and *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, which certainly followed (1605–6). *Measure for Measure*, performed a few weeks later at Whitehall, was also probably the work of 1604, and may be regarded as the most nearly contemporary with *Othello* of all the plays.[1] The "tests" of verse, and the subtler tests of style, confirm the close chronological connection of these five plays, and though they are very insecure guides in determining the order of plays within the same group, or otherwise separated by short intervals of time, they at least offer nothing inconsistent with the position assigned to *Othello*, after *Hamlet* and before *Lear* and *Macbeth*. Shakespeare had now reached, after ten or twelve years of continuous dramatic artistry, a style of consummate dramatic quality. The decorative and lyrical excesses of his earlier writing, the "taffeta phrases" which ravished him no less than they did the lords of Navarre, the linked sweetness of rhymes, even of stanzas and sonnets in dialogue, to which he had returned (as in *Midsummer-Night's Dream* and *Romeo and Juliet*) from the austerer example of Marlowe—all these exuberances of young genius were now subdued to the needs of dramatic expression. There are far more fine phrases in *Hamlet* than in *Love's Labour's Lost*, but they are steeped in the mind of the Prince or the passion of Ophelia; and although rhymes appear in *Othello*, conveying a string of platitudes or an epigram, they are employed to accentuate the sententious gravity of the Duke, or the sardonic irony of Brabantio or Iago. And when the same dramatic need calls, Shakespeare can now be utterly simple, as he can now imagine characters of utter simplicity. The princess of France and her ladies would

[1] Adams suggests that "while reading Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* in preparation for *Measure for Measure*, Shakespeare came upon the narrative of the Moor." (*Life of Shakespeare*, p. 363.)

have blushed to utter a sentence so devoid of brilliant point as Desdemona's

I am very sorry that you are not well (iii. 3. 289),

and Shakespeare himself would then as certainly have rejected it, had he as yet been capable of conceiving womanhood of this exquisite *naïveté*. But a certain noble plainness, passing without effort into magnificence, is the characteristic of the style of *Othello*, among the tragedies, as it is, notably, of the speech of the great Moor himself—the speech of a man grandly simple in make and habit of mind, but with sudden splendors of transfiguring poetry. The tragic intensity of the third and fourth acts, in particular, is conveyed through language, for Shakespeare, almost strikingly unadorned, as if the sheer force of situation made the luxuries of speech superfluous and irrelevant. But ever and anon the pervading economy breaks down before the romantic imagination of Othello, or the penetrating intellect of Iago, and the language takes on the splendid or close-knit habit of their minds. There is no question here of "rhetorical excrescences." Every one of the enthralling poetic outbursts is dramatically justified. In the union of complete dramatic plasticity with consummate poetic reach lies the principal characteristic of Shakespeare's maturest style. *Othello* marks perhaps its culminating point; in any case, its stylistic character is in keeping with the chronological position assigned to it on other grounds, near the middle of the "tragic period."

2. SOURCE OF THE PLOT

§ 4. Shakespeare found the story in the collection, long familiar to him and to his dramatic colleagues, called the *Hecatommithi* ("Hundred Tales"), by Giraldi Cinthio. Giovanibattista Giraldi Cinthio was Professor of Philosophy at Ferrara, and an active and prolific man of letters, who holds a distinguished place among the Italian dramatists of the Renaissance.

In the "Hundred Tales," as in the *Decameron* ("Ten Days") of his master Boccaccio, the stories do not succeed one another with the seeming (but artfully contrived) disorder of the *Canterbury Tales*, but are arranged in groups according to type of subject. The general topic of the Third Decade, to which our story (iii. 7) belongs, is "the unfaithfulness of husbands and wives." It may be summarized as follows. With the exception of the heroine ("Disdemona"), none of the persons are named. The complete text, with a translation, is given in Hazlitt's *Shakespeare's Library* and Furness's New Variorum edition.

Summary

1. The Moor, a soldier of distinction, living at Venice, and in high regard there, is loved by Disdemona, a lady of noble character and beauty, and returns her love. They are married, against the will of her relatives, and live together in perfect concord.

2. The Venetian government, happening to change the garrison at Cyprus, appointed the Moor commander of the fresh troops; Disdemona, at her urgent entreaty, was allowed to accompany him. Among his soldiers was an ensign, in high favor with the Moor, a man of great personal beauty, but of the most depraved nature in the world. There was also a captain, much beloved by the Moor, whom, as her husband's friend, Disdemona, too, treats with the greatest kindness. She was also friendly with the ensign's wife.

3. The ensign fell passionately in love with Disdemona, and finding all his efforts vain, ascribed his failure to her being in love with the captain, and plotted to convict her of adultery. But the Moor's love for his wife and friendship for the captain were such that he could only succeed by stratagem.

4. Some time after the captain was degraded for striking a soldier; Disdemona did her utmost to induce the Moor to restore him, and the Moor told the ensign that he feared her importunity would force him to comply. From this hint the ensign took his cue, and suggested that Disdemona might have reasons for her favor. The Moor asked for explanation, but was merely told to use his eyes. When she next pleaded for the captain, he took her sharply to task. But the ensign, pressed to produce evidence, could only insinuate that she was repelled by his blackness.

5. The ensign accordingly tried to strengthen his case. He contrived to abstract from her person, while she dandled his child, a handkerchief, given by Othello, and left it in the captain's chamber. For some days Disdemona did not miss it. The captain, finding it, and knowing it to be hers, came to her house to restore it. As he knocked, the Moor returned home and the captain fled. The Moor, his suspicions confirmed, called for the handkerchief, on which Disdemona, reddening, pretended to hunt for it, and at last asked feebly whether he had not taken it himself. But the Moor still wished to see the handkerchief actually in the captain's possession. The ensign arranged this, taking the Moor past the captain's house, where his lady, a virtuoso in embroidery, was copying the work.

6. The Moor, now wholly convinced, plans with the ensign the death of the captain and Disdemona. The ensign is afraid of the captain and requires to be bribed. The captain, one evening, is wounded in the leg. Disdemona, the next morning, hears the news with grief. The ensign proposes a plan for Disdemona's death. Some days after they carry it out, beating her to death with a stocking filled with sand, and then screen themselves by pulling down

a beam from the ceiling and give out that she was killed by its fall.

7. After Disdemona's burial the Moor grieves for her. But the ensign incenses the captain against him, and together they bring against the Moor accusations that lead to his being recalled to Venice, tortured, and banished. He is ultimately slain by Disdemona's kin. The ensign continues his malpractices and is ultimately put to death for a wholly unconnected offence.

8. The whole story is supposed to be told by the ensign's wife, who was cognizant of her husband's plot, but was cowed by fear of him from revealing it.

We may note, without comment at this stage, the most obvious points in which the story differs from the play.

1. The action is *leisurely*. The Moor and Disdemona have lived together at Venice for some time before the intrigue begins. There are also repeated intervals of "several days" in its course.

2. The ensign "loves" Disdemona, believes that she loves the captain, and takes the vengeance of a foiled suitor upon both.

3. His wife is cognizant of his plot.

4. A new character appears in the "donna" in the captain's house, who is eager to copy the embroidery of the handkerchief, and is seen by the Moor copying it; while Shakespeare's Bianca, representing the courtesan with whom the captain goes to supper, angrily refuses to copy it.

5. The death of Disdemona and the sequel are entirely different.

6. The political and military background are almost wholly wanting. Shakespeare has made the historic attack of the Turks upon Cyprus in 1570 (subsequent to the publication of Cinthio's story) the outward occasion of the whole action.

3. CRITICAL APPRECIATION

§ 5. What drew Shakespeare to this story of sordid intrigue and stupid crime as material for tragic drama? We must begin by asking what tragic drama now, in 1604, meant for Shakespeare. Little as we know of the ways of his mind, we are justified in holding that from about 1601 to about 1608, while he was shaping the four supreme tragedies and the three only less wonderful Roman plays, his imagination was dominated by a certain ideal of tragic effect which he achieved, with endless diversity in detail, by certain common procedures of art. This ideal and these procedures were the source of what we call "Shakespearean tragedy" *par excellence*. How Shakespeare himself would have described it we

can only guess. But in our terms it meant, stripped of less important features, the ruin and death of a man of extraordinary greatness and intensity of soul by the concurrence of an outward, usually hostile, situation with some weakness or blindness rooted in his own character, and often directly derived from his noblest and most splendid traits.

Previous Elizabethan tragedy presented some features of this tragic scheme rough-hewn. The "one-man play," where the interest is concentrated on a tragic hero struggling with a host of enemies, was traditional. He might be a noble-minded man in conflict with criminals, as in the avenger-plays. Or he might be a man of towering force, swayed by a single passion or motive, like Tamburlaine. More often he was himself criminal as well as immensely able, like Barabbas. The only pre-Shakespearean hero of tragedy who is tragic in the full Shakespearean sense is Faustus.

Where Shakespeare in his conception of tragedy went beyond his predecessors (and his own early efforts) was, above all, in the character of the hero. The lofty and noble spirit, burdened with some temperamental weakness or blindness which, precisely in the situation he is brought into, proves ruinous and fatal, was not perhaps Shakespeare's discovery, for it is Greek in essence; but no one had yet disclosed to the full the sublimity and pathos possible in tragedy thus brought about. For such a hero cannot be hated. In our horror even of Macbeth's crimes there mingles admiration for his splendid qualities and pity for his illusions. The complete sympathy which all his tragic heroes excite—rising, in a Hamlet or an Othello, to a passion of grief and love—is one of the hall-marks of Shakespearean tragedy, and a chief source of its purifying and uplifting power.

The union of great power with weakness can, of course, take many forms. The case which seems to have most strongly appealed to Shakespeare was that of the man of native grandeur of mind, who, in his intercourse with more ordinary men, is in some way blinded and baffled by the large scale on which he feels and thinks. His blindness may look like folly, but it is a folly rooted in his greatness. He appears impracticably generous, like Brutus, or childishly credulous, like Timon and Lear, or childishly obsessed with his own prowess, like Coriolanus. But not all Shakespeare's tragic heroes are of this type. In Macbeth and Antony we find a no less towering grandeur of mind. The errors which bring about their tragic doom are not, however, the guileless blunders of noble simplicity, but vices of lawless passion. While in the case of Hamlet, finally, an idealist equally free from the *naïveté* of the first group

and from the viciousness of the second, the tragic doom is brought about by the unnerving melancholy into which he is plunged by his loathing for his mother's sin. In so far as this springs not from any weakness of character, but from his noble idealism itself, he resembles the "Brutus" group; whereas his intellectual maturity and self-possession ally him rather to Antony and Macbeth—sometimes described as a "criminal Hamlet."

In all these cases the hero is the undoubted focus of the tragic interest. In *Hamlet* this is proverbial. But it is equally certain in *Macbeth* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, where another character approaches the hero very closely in importance and interest, or in *Julius Cæsar*, where the "hero" is not the nominal subject of the play at all. What, then, was the part of the action in relation to this central figure? Certain types of action, no less than certain types of character, would be better fitted than others for bringing about the tragic issue and the tragic effect. An ideal tragic action would be one which would give full scope to the hero's greatness and bring his defects disastrously into play. It would be related to him somewhat as a key to the wards of a lock. The Ghost's summons finds its way to the weakness of Hamlet, and lets loose the tragic doom; put Macbeth's Witches in the place of the Ghost, the key would not have fitted, and the door would have remained closed. Without Cassius at his elbow, Brutus would not have wrecked the conspiracy.

§ 6. In the foregoing survey of Shakespearean tragedy our present play has been deliberately left out of account. To it we must now return. How is *Othello* related to the other mature tragedies? That the hero belongs to our first group, the grand-simple type of Timon and Lear, is evident; he is perhaps its most perfect example. The great distinctive feature of this drama, among the mature tragedies, lies not in the hero, magnificent creation as he is, but in the external agency by which the tragic situation is brought about. Cassius, and Lady Macbeth, and Cleopatra, the Weird Sisters, and the Ghost, play, of course, a large part in thrusting the hero into the situation which is to prove tragic for him and them; but none of them, like Iago, *invents* a situation which becomes tragic because the hero supposes it real. It is as if Lady Macbeth had persuaded her husband that the gentle Duncan was a traitor, and Macbeth had slain him by way of just vengeance. Tragedy thus resting upon invention, upon make-believe, inevitably wants something of the weighty substance which belongs to the tragic clash of real and significant world-forces, as in *Antigone;* and this is part of the reason why *Othello* does impress us as, in substance, somehow slighter than

Hamlet or *Lear*. On the other hand, no tragedy is more acutely pathetic than that which arises from a fatal misunderstanding; and in this kind of tragedy *Othello* is unequalled in Shakespearean drama.

What opening, then, did Cinthio's story offer for such tragedy as this? Simply the outline of an intrigue and a catastrophe, ingeniously managed, but without a hint of greatness. The Moor is merely gross and simple. The ensign meanly avenges himself for his rejection by his commandant's wife. He is at bottom a coward, and has to be encouraged by a bribe. His own wife is a feeble accomplice. Disdemona herself alone offers a suggestion of pathos. All the persons, save the heroine, are cast in a petty mould, and the story itself is an ordinary barrack-room scandal of the day, passably well told. The whole creative, transforming work remained for Shakespeare to do.

§ 7. The critical problem clearly lay in the character of Othello. Was it possible for a man who is thus grossly deceived to be great—so great that his ruin is tragic? To be great even in being deceived, great even when he is destroying his innocent wife? For an Othello who should fulfil these conditions, some kinds of greatness, at least, were ruled out. He could not have the penetrating intelligence of Hamlet, nor his infallible insight into men. But he might have the magnanimity of Brutus, and be wrecked by noble blunders, like him. And this, if not the only solution, was certainly the most Shakespearean. It was, in any case, the one which Shakespeare chose.

Othello is, then, a man at once grandly and simply built, towering in sheer force and nobility above all who surround him. He knows his strength, but has not a particle of arrogance. He neither vaunts his services nor affects to disdain them. He wins recognition and deference with the spontaneous ease of power. He masters without hesitation or effort every situation he is confronted with—save only that which is expressly arranged to delude him by the deliberate devilry of Iago. It is not merely that he always finds the right words and the effective way; there is a magic in his speech and manner, which, backed by his compelling force of personality, masters the prejudices of exclusive Venice, and kindles in sensitive spirits like Cassio and Desdemona an ardor of devotion. Even her father "loves" him, and listens as gladly as she to his tales of "moving accidents by flood and field." He is a soldier; Venice confides in his prowess; war is his "occupation" and delight, and he quits with anguish its "glorious pomp and circumstance." But no soldier (least of all the greatest of Shakespearean soldiers, Coriolanus) ever knew better when force is out of place.

His very first words are a gentle reproof of Iago's professed wish "to have yerk'd [Brabantio] here under the ribs":

> 'T is better as it is.

Presently, it is he who calls the civil brawlers to keep the peace:

> Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.

And then:

> Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
> Without a prompter.

And with what admirable temper he meets old Brabantio's furious order to carry him off to prison:

> What if I do obey?
> How may the duke be therewith satisfied . . .?

Of Othello in his proper "occupation" of war, our glimpses are few but sufficient. "The man commands like a full soldier," is the admiring tribute of those who have served under him, like Montano (ii. 1. 35). When summoned to "slubber the gloss of his new fortunes" with the "more stubborn and boisterous expedition" to Cyprus, he puts aside the good-natured condolence of the duke, not like a man resolutely accepting a hard duty, newly-married lover though he is, but with a kind of eager joy:

> The tyrant custom, most grave senators,
> Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
> My thrice-driven bed of down; I do agnize
> A natural and prompt alacrity
> I find in hardness. (i. 3. 230 *f.*)

But this man, so easily secure in every other situation, falls, almost without resistance, into the gross trap prepared for him by Iago. He is, in short, simply as well as grandly built. His simplicity is that of one who thinks too largely to apprehend easily the devices and subterfuges natural to weaker and smaller men. Such simplicity goes well, as we have seen, with the heroic character, but it is clearly distinguished from everything that at all resembles it elsewhere in Shakespeare. The simplicity of Coriolanus is the mere obtuseness of the great fighter who scorns all arts and accomplishments but those of the camp. The simplicity of Lear is the blindness of a lifelong autocrat who has read the world only through an elusive veil of flattery and subservience. The simplicity of Brutus

is the too abstract habit of a doctrinaire mind, plunged without preparation into the welter of politics. The case of Brutus is least unlike the case of Othello, for in both men it is something great and ideal in them, their very magnanimity, that betrays them, whereas with Coriolanus and Lear, grand as they are, what works disaster is something childish and futile. But the mind of Brutus, with all his philosophic culture, appears narrow, even provincial, beside the magnificent amplitude and intensity of Othello, the nursling of deserts and battle-fields; as Brutus's finest eloquence appears pedestrian beside the enthralling poetry that breaks at every decisive moment, unsought, from Othello's lips.

Such a man might, perhaps, have in any case found himself at a disadvantage in a city reputed to be inhabited by the most astute and subtle population in Europe. But Othello is further distinguished from the Venetians by race, by color, by cast of experience. Whether—beyond the "thick-lips" (i. 1. 67), and the swarthy complexion[1]—Shakespeare associated any racial traits with his "Moor," as he certainly did with his French (*Henry V*) and Welsh (*Henry IV*), is doubtful. That "these Moors are changeable in their wills" (i. 3. 352) no doubt expresses a current opinion about them in England. But Iago's gibes must not be taken to be part of the characterization of Othello. Iago himself, when alone, gives the lie to this sneer, admitting that the Moor is likely to prove constant in love (ii. 1. 298). It will not do, in any case, to imagine that Othello himself is seriously contrasted as a noble barbarian with the refined civility of Venice; in fine breeding he is fully a match for the most polished Venetian he meets. But that he is racially distinct from the Venetians, an alien in the society which accepts him in its own interest, and into which he has married, is a fact of moment for the plot. Iago subtly uses it to insinuate his ignorance of the crafty ways of Venetian women. Brabantio loved him and invited him; but that his daughter should "leap," even by way of marriage, "into the sooty bosom" of this alien is too monstrous to have been effected without illicit "charms." And this alien soldier has come

[1] It is interesting to recall that Othello's color was one of the reasons employed by Lamb in his paradoxical argument that the tragedies of Shakespeare are unfitted for presentation on the visible stage. Desdemona's love for a black man, he said, is the triumph "of imagination over the senses"; but in the theater, "left to our poor unassisted senses," we find it revolting. See also, in Furness's New Variorum edition, pp. 389–96, a number of arguments on the question whether Othello should be represented on the modern stage as a black man.

to Venice, nine months before the play opens, from a life of romantic and mysterious adventure. He is born of men of "royal siege"; from his seventh year he has travelled and fought and suffered "by flood and field," in "antres vast and deserts idle," among cannibals and in enemy prisons. He has seen men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders, and received a magic handkerchief from an eastern sibyl. His life is a romance, and Desdemona was not the only Venetian listener whom it enthralled. He is obviously admired "for the dangers he has passed," as well as prized in the interest of the general safety. But neither such admiration nor the friendly regard he doubtless gave in return could yield the intimate understanding founded on common blood.

Iago perfectly appreciates all these points. Even before he has conceived his plot he can scoff, as we have seen, at the frailty of love vows taken by a pair so ill-mated, and his scoff is too cynical not to express his mind. And the thought that clinches his resolve when his plot is shaped is that:

> The Moor is of a free and open nature,
> That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,
> And will as tenderly be led by the nose
> As asses are. (i. 3. 405.)

In working this "free open nature," deeply as he despises it, Iago proceeds with extraordinary astuteness. He prepares the ground with the utmost care; fortune, moreover, plays into his hands. Before breathing any suspicion of Desdemona herself, he suggests a suspicion of Cassio, his lieutenant. It was an easy and safe first step, which, successfully taken, the further enterprise would be comparatively simple. And Cassio's character lends itself to his cunning strategy.

§ 8. Some circumstances were indeed against him. As in the novel, Cassio is the Moor's intimate and trusted friend; until the moment of dismissal he is always "Michael" to his chief. He is, indeed, a man of singular charm; outwardly engaging ("a proper man"), and with "a daily beauty in his life" which Iago, frankest of cynics, fears to have set beside the "ugliness" of his own (v. 1. 19). But these engaging qualities only serve to bring Cassio into the kind of ambiguous situation required for Iago's purpose. He is attractive to women, and himself easily inflamed by their charm. Iago's "almost damned in a fair wife" probably conveys this in his coarse dialect. The light o' love, Bianca, whom other men pursue, runs piteously after him to implore him to return (iv. 4. 172*f.*). Othello

had used his persuasive tongue to plead his cause with Desdemona; Cassio had "gone a-wooing with him" and carried messages "very oft" between them (iii. 3, 70, 94, 100).[1] It is clear, too, that, in the conduct of this delicate business, Cassio has conceived a worshipping adoration of the exquisite character of Desdemona, while she gives him warm friendship in return. There was as little thought of disloyalty on his part as on hers; but both were naturally frank, she through innocence, he by his ardent and impulsive temperament.[2] Iago was not present when Cassio, awaiting the arrival of her ship with his men on the Cyprus shore, breaks into that lyric ecstasy of admiration of "the divine Desdemona," a maid

That paragons description and wild fame.

But he witnessed their meeting, with its confidences, handclasps, and other signs of warm friendship; and "with as little a web as this will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio" (ii. 1. 169).

Iago accordingly proceeds to take the first step—the night brawl. His conduct of the business, a brilliant piece of acting in every point (cf. § 13), and especially his "report" to Othello, shows that he is at least as much concerned to convince Othello that he is Cassio's good friend as to secure his dismissal. Both are necessary to his plot. It would have seriously discounted the second success, and his use of Desdemona's consequent pleading for her friend's reinstatement, had Othello had reason to suspect him of paying off a grudge against Cassio—nay, against himself. Yet there was good ground for such suspicion; Othello had just given the lieutenancy to Cassio, passing over Iago. Was it so certain that this Venetian, who had seen a Florentine appointed over his head in the Venetian service by a general who was also an alien, would neglect a chance of paying off his grudge on both by embroiling them in a groundless quarrel? Such a situation would have put a wary man on his guard. But nothing of the kind occurs to Othello.

Iago, however, was conscious of the risk, and exerts himself to

[1] In i. 2. 50 *f.*, it is true, Cassio appears to hear of the marriage, and even of Desdemona, for the first time. We must suppose either that, being in the secret of the elopement, he feigns ignorance, or, with Dr. Bradley, that Shakespeare later introduced the circumstance of Cassio's cognizance of the courtship, seeing its importance for the plot, and omitted to make the requisite alteration here.

[2] The difference between his loyal and delicate sense of Desdemona's charm and Iago's gross estimate of a woman "full of game" is finely touched in the little dialogue between them (ii. 3. 15–29).

appear as Cassio's good friend, who would do his utmost to shield him from punishment. He succeeds completely.

> I know, Iago,
> Thy honesty and love doth mince the matter,
> Making it light to Cassio.

Clearly, after this, Iago could reckon with some security that his graver insinuation against Cassio would also be regarded by Othello as the unwilling testimony of a good friend, not as the calumny of a disappointed rival.

But Iago had also secured his main point, Cassio's dismissal, and he now proceeds to build upon it the opening situation of his plot. Desdemona's compassionate sympathy for her friend in his sudden disgrace might be trusted to hurry her to imprudent lengths; but Iago, who leaves no stone unturned, works further upon her eager, impressionable nature by feigning himself grieved, and conveying this to her through his wife:

> O, that 's an honest fellow. Do not doubt, Cassio,
> But I will have my lord and you again
> As fixedly as you were. (iii. 3. 5.)

Her unreasonable importunity in the ensuing passage fulfilled Iago's calculation completely. What his gross nature hardly foresaw was that Cassio, in his self-abasement, would shrink away from the presence of his old commander, and thus put the deadliest of weapons in Iago's hands.

> *Oth.* Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?
> *Iago.* Cassio, my lord! No, sure, I cannot think it,
> That he would steal away so guilty-like,
> Seeing you coming. (iii. 3. 37 *f.*)

The ground at all points thus prepared, Iago's case against Cassio is established almost before it is stated. He has only to hint his suspicion, and the momentum of his authority, as one not only "full of love and honesty," but who weighs his words before he gives them breath, drives it home more surely than explicit proof. His very "stops" and hesitations "fright me the more," cries the unhappy victim.

Iago's hints take Othello utterly unawares. Just because he had never dreamed of asking whether this charming officer, his confidential go-between, could possibly be disloyal, he became the more helpless to resist the doubt when it was suggested by another friend, who was also Cassio's friend, and whose honesty was a proverb.

The same terrible power of obsession serves Iago in the more

delicate and hazardous operation of incriminating Desdemona. But before discussing this it is necessary to consider the nature of Othello's love.

§ 9. Othello is not prone to love, as he is not prone to suspect evil. At the time of the action, too, he is no longer young, and the first ardor of masculine passion has subsided (i. 3. 264). He even speaks of himself as having declined into the vale of years ("though that's not much"), and fears that this may be the explanation of his young wife's infidelity (iii. 3. 265). And as for marriage, he has prized his life of roving adventure and "unhoused freedom" so dearly that he would not "for the sea's worth" have put it into the "circumscription and confines" of a home, but that he "loved the gentle Desdemona" (i. 2. 24 *f.*). Nay, he loved her, he tells us himself, because she "pitied" the incidental hardships of this roving life. He is conscious of surrendering something in marriage. None the less, Desdemona had touched the springs of a passion which takes possession of him like a transfiguring flame, and sweeps all considerations of gain or loss to the winds. It stirs that which is rarest and most wonderful in him, the imaginative vision and ecstasy of a poet. It did not, indeed, need imagination to find in Shakespeare's Desdemona the crowning marvel of his romantic career. But this apparition of exquisite womanhood, discovered in the heart of a mundane population, enchants him the more because its loveliness has, with all its engaging reality, the rarity and strangeness of romance. Her beauty ravishes him with a poignancy which no mere acuteness of the senses could produce.

> O thou weed,
> Who art so lovely fair and smell'st so sweet
> That the sense aches at thee. (iv. 2. 68.)

> Yet I'll not shed her blood,
> Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,
> And smooth as monumental alabaster. (v. 2. 3.)

Again and again her visible presence, suddenly entering, or her appealing glance, drives back the forces of malign suggestion. When he has stabbed her with the words, "Heaven truly knows that thou art false as hell," and she asks, "To whom, my lord? with whom? how am I false?" he bursts into tears:

> O Desdemona! away! away! away! (iv. 2. 39.)

And before the crisis of the last scene:

> Ah, balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
> Justice to break her sword! (v. 2. 17.)

So potent was the spell of Desdemona's presence when his mind was already poisoned against her. What it was to him before it had to contend with this malign influence, we know from the ineffable cry of rapture—not less a cry that it is uttered in perfectly measured speech—with which he meets her at Cyprus:

> O my soul's joy!
> If after every tempest come such calms,
> May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!
> . . . . . .
> If it were now to die,
> 'T were now to be most happy; for I fear
> My soul hath her content so absolute
> That not another comfort like to this
> Succeeds in unknown fate.

In these and other passages Othello expresses the spiritual exaltation of love with an intensity nowhere surpassed in literature. And so completely does his joy in Desdemona answer to the feelings which Shakespeare's portrayal of her rouses in us, that we imagine that he knows her as we know her. Yet, a few hours after this rapturous meeting, he believes she has grossly betrayed him, and murders her in her bed. His words seem to reflect a sense of the loveliness of Desdemona's nature beyond the power of all Iago's strategy to disturb. And yet a few halting sentences suffice to shatter it. How explain this paradox?

The truth is that Othello's love has all the traits of a deep and noble passion save one—insight into the soul of the woman he loves. That love is "blind" was proverbial; but what Othello is blind to, or only insecurely sees, is not her faults, but her childlike purity of nature. Had he seen it, he could not have been persuaded that it was not there. He has momentary glimpses of it, but they pass with her presence, and finally her presence itself fails to evoke them:

> If she be false, oh then Heaven mocks itself!
> I'll not believe it. (iii. 3. 98.)

What he does see, and describes with intense poetry of feeling and phrase, is not her soul, but the emotion with which her apparition fills his own. What he *knows* with absolute clearness, and feels with overwhelming power, is not that she is true, but that he cannot live if she be false.

> There when I have garner'd up my heart,
> Where either I must live or bear no life;
> The fountain from the which my being runs
> Or else dries up—to be discarded thence.
>
> (iv. 2. 57 *f.*)

And he knows this even before he has conceived a doubt of her truth. Witness his outburst when she has left him at the outset of the Temptation scene:

> Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul
> But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,
> Chaos is come again. (iii. 3. 90 *f.*)

§ 10. It was with a lover and husband of this quality that Iago had to do. Of the depth and the romantic beauty of Othello's love his foul mind could have no conception, but he perfectly understood how little it sprang from secure knowledge. He had observed and noted, too, all the incidental circumstances which favored the attempt to wreck it. He was shrewd enough, indeed, to see that Othello was of a "noble and loving nature," and that to destroy his love was an immensely formidable task. He approached it accordingly with extraordinary circumspection and subtlety in the crucial portion of the Temptation scene. Up to iii. 3. 110, at least, Othello has no suspicion of his wife. Cassio, he supposes, has made improper advances to her, but of her complicity there is as yet no question. But Iago now stealthily creates the impression that there is some darker mystery behind, some monster in his thought too hideous to be shown. His hesitations, his half sentences ("For Michael Cassio, I dare be sworn that he is honest" [but—]), and finally, his resolute, even defiant refusal to say what he means, excite Othello's terrified eagerness to the utmost pitch. Nothing will now satisfy him but absolute frank disclosure of "the horrible conceit." "By heaven, I 'll know thy thoughts." Then Iago insinuates that disquieting truths are best unknown, and when Othello insists, replies with a warning illustration from the torments of a jealous husband. The husband of Desdemona might well have retorted, "What is that to me? I have a wife beyond suspicion, out with your dark truth!" But Othello, instead of this, groans, "O misery!" The poison has gone home; without one overt hint he understands that Iago believes Desdemona to be false, and that is enough to bring him to the verge of believing it himself.

Having achieved this, Iago proceeds to pour on Othello's tortured mind the confirming circumstances. Othello knew them as well as he, but he had never till now attended to them or perceived their significance. Desdemona is a Venetian, and

> In Venice they do not let heaven see the pranks
> They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience
> Is not to leav 't undone, but keep 't unknown.

But Desdemona was incapable of deceit! Was he so sure of that?

She did deceive her father, marrying you.

Iago cunningly repeats the parting shaft of Brabantio as he left the Senate-house (i. 3. 294), and to Othello's obsessed mind converts the repeated warning into a prophecy perhaps already fulfilled. Iago grows more audacious as he grows more secure. He had himself declared equivocally that he thought Cassio honest (iii. 3. 125). When Othello, as if catching at the phrase, echoes it of Desdemona,

I do not doubt but Desdemona 's honest (ii. 3. 225),

Iago cries with a hardly disguised sneer,

Long live she so! and long live you to think so!

And he proceeds—with the barest apology—to make his most dangerous suggestion, that there was something unnatural in the love which Desdemona had given to the black alien, after refusing the "curled darlings" of her own clime, complexion, and degree. Othello at this point can bear no more, and abruptly dismisses him. But far from resenting his hints, or repelling them, he is sure that "this honest creature sees and knows more, far more, than he unfolds."

When they meet again (iii. 3. 330 *f.*) a fiercer mood has come on. He sees in Iago the cause of his torment, and torment has driven him—the least cynical of men—to adopt Iago's cynical doctrine that "'tis better to be much abused than but to know 't a little." His obsession has nevertheless suffered a check. He has seen Desdemona, and felt her hand upon his burning brow. The alternatives are not between suspicion and certainty of her guilt, but between trusting her and trusting Iago. His paralyzed judgment swings impotently to and fro—

I think my wife be honest, and think she is not,
I think that thou art just, and think thou art not,

—an intolerable state to his resolute and vehement nature, and he now for the first time calls on Iago for his evidence. Iago produces it, now no longer with feigned reluctance; that has served its purpose, and Othello, at last fully convinced, gives full rein to his passion for revenge, and vows the eternity of his hate in language of a superb and terrible beauty, which makes even his tragic infatuation sublime:

Never, Iago. Like to the Pontic sea, &c. (iii. 453 *f.*)

§ 11. It is needless here to dwell upon the history of Othello's mind between this point and the catastrophe. He needs no further preparation for it; even the deadly proof of her own guilt given by Desdemona in iii. 4. can add nothing to his resolve. A small man would have gone straight to its execution. Othello's will, like Hamlet's, is paralyzed by his very greatness of soul. Both have suffered the shipwreck of a faith and love possible only to a noble spirit. But the shock tells very differently on the two men. Hamlet is goaded by it to a hectic and brilliant energy; Othello, at once more passionate and less introspective, is only bewildered and confused. "Chaos comes again" with the wreck of love as he had foretold (iii. 3. 90) before he dreamed of disaster.

It is this change which distinguishes the Othello of iv. 1. from the Othello of iii. 3. The situation is ostensibly the same. It is a second Temptation scene. Iago is reiterating his old evidence, and adding new and more monstrous proofs. Cassio has now "confessed," and Othello is made to hear him chuckle over his conquest. But Othello is no longer the man he was. His mind reels, the torturing words crowd and jostle in his brain, and he swoons. After the scene with Cassio, rage and sorrow clash together with only less incoherence:

> Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damned to-night; for she shall not live; no, my heart is turned to stone; I strike it, and it hurts my hand. O the world hath not a sweeter creature:
>
> . . . . .
>
> *Iago.* She 's the worse for all this.
>
> *Oth.* O, a thousand, thousand times: and then, of so gentle a condition!
>
> *Iago.* Ay, too gentle.
>
> *Oth.* Nay, that 's certain: but yet the pity of it, Iago! O Iago, the pity of it, Iago! (iv. 1. 191 *f.*)

And his rage, like his sorrow, is now more violent and uncontrolled. He had swooned with grief; now, in a sudden provocation, he strikes her in public (iv. 1. 251), and, without provocation, brands her with the foulest of names. Even in the Death scene he is not secure from impulses of vindictive fury which momentarily blot out his finer mind. One such impulse cuts short his delay and ends her life; another prompts the hideous explanation to Emilia, "She 's like a liar gone to burning hell." But when this scene opens, the imminence and awfulness of the task before him have restored his self-control and quenched his anger. He is no longer the husband maddened at betrayal, but the vindicator of justice, weeping with a

heavenly sorrow, and slaying what he loves, doing "nought in hate, but all in honour" (v. 2. 295). He uses the language of the world, but not altogether in the world's way. Laertes fought with Hamlet "in honour" when "satisfied in nature" (*Ham.* v. 2. 255). And Othello means his hearers to understand that he has only acted as the husband of a guilty wife was bound to act. But the force of "honour" in him is not derived from any code of gentle or military obligation. It is the persuasion of a great, passionate, veracious nature that falseness, though so lovely that the sense aches at it, must be blotted out.

§ 12. Thus wonderfully did Shakespeare create a great, tragic, and heroic figure from Cinthio's poor dupe. Only less wonderful was his transformation of the innocent victim. Desdemona, in Cinthio's tale, has hardly any definable character; she only merits her name ("the unhappy") because she chances to come to an unhappy end. But Shakespeare's persons are never thus blank or neutral; when they seem most helpless and passive, like Ophelia or Hero, they have qualities of moment for their fate. His Desdemona, then, had to have in herself one of the conditions of her "unhappy" end to co-operate innocently and unwittingly in Othello's tragedy and in her own. Cinthio had indeed given one hint of value. His Desdemona was attracted to the Moor "not by womanly passion, but by his valour." The distinction was crude; but Shakespeare, too, has made Desdemona's delight in Othello's adventures the first occasion of her passionate love,—

> She loved me for the dangers I had passed.

Her love, in other words, like his, is kindled by imagination; he is romantic, heroic, and mysterious, beyond all the men she has known; his black complexion, which Venice, in the person of its Brabantios, Iagos, and Emilias, secretly despises and derides, is for her the mark of one tanned by Arabian deserts and tropical suns. To the last something in his huge personality remains strange to her, though its fascination turns to terror, and the girl who listened rapt to his tale of monsters shudders on her deathbed at the ominous horror of his rolling eyes and convulsively contorted lips. But at the outset her admiration gives her security and confidence, she takes her fate boldly into her own hands, and astonishes, by a midnight elopement, those who only knew her as a "still and quiet" maid, who hardly moved without a blush.[1] In the Senate, too, her bearing is

[1] Like almost all the other heroines of Shakespeare's tragic and serious drama, it is to be noted, Desdemona has no mother. Lady

perfectly assured; she is as little overawed as Othello himself by the authorities of the Venetian State, or by the menaces of the father whom she has deceived. When the question is raised where she shall stay during her husband's absence, it is she who initiates the plan of going with him, and Othello and the Senate who comply.

Yet this girl, so clear, resolute, and self-possessed in carrying through her union with Othello, proves utterly helpless when, a few hours later, she has to encounter his groundless and unexplained anger. Determined as Rosalind, nay as Helena, in compassing her love, she suffers its frustration as unresistingly as Ophelia or Hero. She is indeed a more exquisite character and a subtler creation than any of these. Her lovely nature has the ardor and the innocence, the daring and the meekness, at once, of those who know no evil. Her father was not wrong when he spoke of her still, quiet spirit, nor Othello when he spoke of the "gentle" Desdemona. But her stillness and gentleness are not the signs of apathy or of well-bred decorum; they are the seeming quiescence of a soul whose inner ardors of passion, pity, and hero-worship have not yet been evoked. The coming of Othello evokes them. So, in less degree, does the engaging and chivalrous Cassio. His disgrace, like Othello's hardships, excite her pity, and without a thought of harm or of danger, she expresses with *naïve* energy what she feels. Her eager sympathy carries her further than the importunate pleading of iii. 3. and iii. 4. She treats him with frank *camaraderie*, is glad when he is appointed to Othello's command at Cyprus, and, when she thinks he is killed, cries out "Alas, he is betrayed, and I undone!" The spirit of enterprise which braves peril could not be more fatally united with the *naïveté* which runs into it unawares; and the combination is not the less deadly that both qualities spring from what is loveliest in her nature. Her want of apprehension, in the face of Othello's menacing demands, is not want of address, but the incapacity of a soul utterly ignorant of evil to read the signs of it, above all, to imagine misconstruction in the man to whom she has given her heart. When Othello's anger at length becomes unmistakable, the shock of the sudden dread that he does not love her shatters in a moment all that young ardor of enterprise which his glorious apparition had called forth. She only quails under his foul epithets, incapable even of that momentary righteous scorn for which, in a similar situation,

Capulet is a mother only in name. Perdita's mother is restored to her only at the close of the play. The unmothered loneliness or independence of Hero, Ophelia, Cordelia, even of Rosalind, Viola, Helena, Portia, and Perdita, is vital to their stories.

we love Imogen the more. Her unresisting self-abandonment, when the means of self-defense lay so near, might irritate us as the sign of a poor spirit, did we not hear in every word the accent of a love which no ill usage can sour or dull, and which meets death itself at his hands with no thought but to turn away the guilt from him:

> Nobody; I myself. Farewell.
> Commend me to my kind lord, O farewell.

§ 13. The characters of Othello and Desdemona lie open before us; but something of the inscrutability which so completely masked him to the eye of his associates still clings for us to the character of "honest Iago." The villain of genius belonged to an older, more primitive type of Elizabethan hero than the noble victim of illusion. Sensational crime, deliberate and able, deeply satisfied the native taste in tragedy, as witnessed by a succession of famous creations from Appius[1] to Overreach.[2] Machiavelli was popularly believed to have provided this sensational criminal with a justifying philosophy. Shakespeare himself, always readier to touch old methods and motives to finer issues than to discard them, had in his youth been interested in the portrayal of villains of almost super-human genius, in *Titus Andronicus* and *Richard III*,—though we do not know how much of either play was of his own making. But with the deeper apprehension of tragedy which begins to appear in his work about 1600, the mere contriver of harm could no longer suffice. You shuddered at his villainies, and pitied his innocent victims; but his final ruin was simply a just Nemesis, and you left the theater cheerfully satisfied that justice had been done. Shakespeare, whether with the help of Seneca and Euripides or not, had discovered what the Greeks so profoundly understood, that the man who is the center of tragic interest must excite sympathy, however much we may condemn his acts. Macbeth touches our sympathy as Richard never does. In the earliest of the mature tragedies even the men who entangle the hero in his tragic errors excite pity at moments. Our scorn for Claudius relaxes in his prayer; and Cassius, despite his base motives for slaying Cæsar, is more pathetic than Brutus himself. But the completely unsympathetic criminal, in this secondary capacity, was never excluded; if *King Lear* beyond all the other tragedies resembles a giant conflict between good and evil, it is because an Edmund, a Goneril, and a Regan contrive the harms; while the villain Iachimo, in the less somber tragedy of *Cymbeline*,

[1] *Appius and Virginia*, c. 1563.
[2] *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, by Massinger, c. 1625.

is, no more than Edmund, saved from our loathing by his late repentance. Earlier than all these, and superior to them all in profundity of conception and wealth of psychological detail, is the Iago of our play.

Hazlitt declared Iago to be "one of Shakespeare's works of supererogation." Certainly, for effecting the tragic business of the play, a far simpler and more ordinary rogue would have served. Othello's happiness could have been wrecked by a being imagined with less daring originality. But economy of power was not much in Shakespeare's way. His bent, in characterization as in style, is towards a glorious excess, disproportioned to, or even, as in Shylock and Falstaff, in conflict with, the primary purpose of the play. There is no such conflict here. Iago never touches our sympathies for a moment; Othello from beginning to end excites our warmest love and pity. But in intellectual and dramatic interest Iago's rôle fully equals Othello's, and the ambitious tragic actor chooses it as often.

For Iago, unlike the Shakespearean criminals who most resemble him, offers a problem. Edmund and Richard are simply ambitious and unscrupulous men who want a duchy or a kingdom, and plot the death of father or nephews to get it. We do not ask why they plot thus, for their action is a commonplace of history. But Iago's case resists these facile explanations. It is not merely that his plot is a peculiarly horrible outrage, or that his alleged grounds for it are utterly disproportionate, or that his reputation in astute and censorious Venice for honesty is hard to reconcile with his consummate virtuosity in crime. All this is true. But Shakespeare did not mean Iago to be an ordinary rogue. He was not, in particular, to be like his original, a rejected lover who avenges himself by slandering the lady to her husband. This stock personage of Italian romance did not in the least interest Shakespeare.[1] The revenge motive, so popular at this time on the stage, was now not good enough for him; and we see in Iago, as in Hamlet, how he transformed it. Iago does not love Desdemona, being incapable of loving anyone. He inclines to think that Cassio loves her (ii. 1. 296), and even that she loves him, but these facts only interest him as points favoring the success of his game. Several other motives are, however, suggested by Iago himself, and though his evidence is never to be implicitly trusted, it cannot be ignored.

We learn, at the outset, that he "hates" Othello for having made Cassio lieutenant instead of himself (i. 1. 6*f.*). Later (i. 3. 393,

[1] He made a similar change in the parallel case of *Much Ado*. Don John, like Iago, has no grudge against the lady, only a dispassionate taste for wrecking marriages.

ii. 1. 304 *f.*) it appears that he suspects Othello of having seduced his wife, and, later still, that he likewise suspects Cassio (ii. 1. 316). But Iago is not the kind of man whom offences like these goad into action. He is too profoundly immoral to feel the sting of wounded honor, and too conscious of his power to be gravely concerned about office and rank. He is exempt from most of the mortifications which torment weaker and better men. The basis of his character is a union of absolute egoism with prodigious intellectual force. His passionless cynicism is hardly more capable of hate than it is of love. When he says he "loves" Desdemona (ii. 1. 300), he means merely that he proposes to be "evened with" Othello "wife for wife" for his supposed seduction of Emilia. When he says he "hates" Othello (*ib.*), he means that he has various plausible reasons for hating him, and intends to act as if these were driving him on. He frankly appreciates the fine qualities of his intended victims. Cassio has "a daily beauty in his life which makes me ugly"; Othello ("howbeit I endure him not") "is of a constant, loving, noble nature." Nor does he in the least palliate the vileness of his own course. His plot is a "monstrous birth" which "hell and night" are needed to bring forth (i. 3. 409). And he compares his plausible management of it to the cunning of devils, who when they will

> the blackest sins put on
> They do suggest at first with heavenly shows. (ii. 3. 356.)

But this is a purely intellectual recognition of moral values, wholly untouched by moral emotion. Iago is a master of the ways of men, as Othello sees, and reads character, as far as his perverted instincts permit, with extreme penetration, but without either desire or regret. His moral indifference passes for good nature, as his craft passes for wisdom, and his cynicism for the sincerity of a "heart that passion cannot rule" (iii. 3. 123). He has the heart and brain of Goethe's Mephistopheles, but disguises it even better than he; Milton's Satan, who has tears "such as angels weep," and feels a pang of anguish at the sight of Adam and Eve "imparadised in one another's arms," is far less diabolic than Iago.

Like Mephistopheles, too (and like Richard, but unlike Satan), Iago has humor—the ironic humor of a strong man easily secure in his strength, who can afford to play with his victims; the cynical humor which reduces everything to the lowest terms, and caps a compliment with an anticlimax. His dialogue with Desdemona and Emilia, after their landing at Cyprus, is genial, even gay in tone, but his sardonic temper and gross fancy constantly break through:

and his description of "a deserving woman indeed," and what she is good for, leads up only to that "most lame and impotent conclusion," as even the gentle Desdemona calls it, that she is "to suckle fools and chronicle small beer."

Iago is here at his ease, in undress, as it were, and as much himself as he ever appears when not alone. The serious business of the plot has not yet begun, is not even completely shaped in his mind; and in the meantime he is ready to amuse his general's lady with brilliant sword-play of wit. Not that he cares a jot for the aching anxiety she is trying to beguile. He even lets himself go with a cynical brutality which belongs to his character, not to the part, provoking Desdemona's final comment, "What say you, Cassio? Is he not a most profane and liberal [*licentious*] counsellor?" and Cassio's chivalrous apology for him as a blunt soldier, accustomed to "speak home."

But in general we see Iago playing a part for a definite end, and with consummate skill. He is so inveterate and so masterly an actor that all the world calls him "honest Iago." To the poor dupe Roderigo he expounds himself at the outset with contemptuous unreserve:

> In following [the Moor] I follow but myself;
> Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
> But seeming so, for my peculiar end;
> For when my outward action doth demonstrate
> The native act and figure of my heart
> In compliment extern, 't is not long after
> But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
> For daws to peck at: I am not what I am. (i. 1. 58 *f.*).

His virtuosity in this art is seen when he has to play a part that seems in conflict with his saturnine and passionless nature, as when he leads the revel in song and jest in the drinking-scene (iii. 3), or caps the glowing poetry of Othello's vow with a very fair counterfeit (iii. 3. 463 *f.*); while the tragic catastrophe itself attests the power he throws into his impersonation of the honest friend who reluctantly opens the eyes of a deluded husband. And Iago is not without the actor's zest in his own play. But it never for a moment beguiles him to forget his situation and his purpose. "Art for art" has no attraction for this artist. Every stroke and gesture is profoundly calculated, but for an end outside the play.[1] He is, as Hazlitt said, "an amateur of tragedy in real life." He arranges

[1] As in *Hamlet* and—less notably—*Macbeth*, Shakespeare presents this important character in part by means of a series of soliloquies. For the Elizabethans, the soliloquy was a dramatic convention

a drama, and acts the leading part; but the blood must be real blood, and the death real death. His sport is the play of a prodigiously active intellect in the service of a lawless will. And the force that at bottom impels him beyond whatever ends of ambition or revenge he professes to pursue is the masterful egoist's "will to power." His plot satisfies this instinct in two ways. It is spun finely from the cunning substance of his own brain. And it works swift and dramatic ruin in the lives of fortunate men. Evil is Iago's good. The base hint of mischief afoot fires his imagination. At the very outset the idea of vexing Othello's new joy releases the springs of his invention,—

> Poison his delight,
> Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen.
> And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
> Plague him with flies, . . .

—that same invention which, when invited to praise a good and beautiful woman, comes from his brain "as birdlime does from frize," the hard birth of a laboring muse:

> Put me not to it, gentle lady,
> For I am nothing if not critical.

§ 14. Iago's wife, Emilia, is a commonplace, worldly, rather sensual woman, sullenly submissive to her husband, immeasurably below him in intellect, and not obviously above him in character. She fills through the greater part of the play an unattractive, even ignoble rôle. She wonders that any wife should refuse to be false to her marriage vows for a sufficient consideration, and in her own case we surmise that the consideration need not be very large (iv. 3). If we reject Iago's suspicion that she has been the mistress of Othello or of Cassio, it is not because we think her incapable of it. In the matter of the handkerchief she lends herself, stupidly but innocently, to Iago's purpose, which she might have known could not possibly bode good. When Othello calls for it, and Desdemona is in distress for its loss, Emilia, who could have explained the matter in a moment, remains silent, in dread of her husband. This is a

which permitted the dramatist on occasion to show what was going on in the speaker's *mind:*—it matters little whether it is thought of as uttered audibly. The student will find it worth while to give particular attention to this remarkable series of Iago's soliloquies: i. 3. 389–410; ii. 1. 294–321; ii. 3. 50–65; ii. 3. 342–368; ii. 3. 388–394; iii. 3. 321–333; iv. 1. 45–58; iv. 1. 101–104; v. 1. 11–22; v. 1. 128–129.

gross lapse, but there is no ground for suspecting that she is aware of his plot and deliberately plays into his hands. Her amazed iteration when she learns the truth ("My husband!" v. 2. 140 *f.*) makes that clear. Desdemona has deeply touched her shallow, mundane heart. A woman so "heavenly pure" had never come within her ken before. Even in the case of the lost handkerchief she gives way unwillingly, and pleads feebly to have it returned to "the poor lady," who will "run mad when she shall lack it." But when she hears (for she has been listening at the door) Othello in the inner chamber lay the foulest terms upon his wife, her anger breaks out fiercely against the slanderer who has abused the Moor (iv. 2. 130 *f.*). And when she sees Desdemona dead, and by Othello's hand, she flames into a passion of indignant grief which overpowers all thought of her own safety, or of respect for her husband's chief, as, a few minutes later, it overpowers her more genuine awe of her husband himself. In vain Iago, checkmated by the unforeseen move of this despised pawn, threatens her, and she scorns to be silent now:

> I peace?
> No, I will speak as liberal as the north:
> Let heaven and men and devils, let them all,
> All, all, cry shame against me, yet I 'll speak!

And so, echoing with her last breath her mistress's willow-song, she "dies in music."

§ 15. Like Emilia, Roderigo is Iago's tool; like her, he dies by Iago's hand; like her, he contributes something (though far less) to the ultimate exposure. Shakespeare has created few more contemptible persons. His pretensions to Desdemona's hand have been cut short by his formal exclusion from her house. When she is married to Othello he has thoughts of drowning himself, but is easily cajoled to exchange his money and jewels for the possession of her person.

§ 16. Brabantio is of concern to the plot, both as the father of Desdemona and as a typical Venetian senator. His love for his daughter was deep—for her loss killed him—but it was imperious and without understanding, like Lear's. We pity him in the opening scene, unnerved with anguish and anxiety at the first news of Desdemona's flight. But he is utterly incapable of understanding her love for Othello, whom he himself has "loved" and listened to with delight, and his peremptory rejection of her when she claims leave to prefer her husband to her father,

> God be wi' you, I have done,
> Please it your grace, on to the state affairs,

is as revolting, in its kind, as the corresponding outburst of the father of Cordelia. But a father thus fiercely jealous of his paternal rights was required by the plot, and the final reason of his dramatic existence is perhaps disclosed in the parting shot, afterwards used with such deadly effect, as already noted, by Iago:

She has deceived her father, and may thee.

But Brabantio is also a great Venetian magnifico. He is "beloved" (i. 2. 12) and influential, with powerful friends, whose support he can command at need (i. 1. 181). In council his voice counts with the Doge's, and he can bandy proverbs with that dignitary on equal terms. His relations with Othello symbolize those of the State. He entertains the black alien as an amusing visitor, and indignantly spurns him when he presumes to win the daughter of the house. The republic, too, shows astute compliance towards the invaluable soldier when the Turk threatens, and promptly cashiers him (doubtless at Brabantio's urgency) when the danger is past.

Brabantio's brother, Gratiano, and his kinsman Lodovico, are slightly touched. Gratiano tells us of Brabantio's death (v. 2. 204 *f.*), and thinks him happy to have died. He is an elderly Venetian, and though we must beware of seeking too much meaning in a few brief speeches, we surmise in him something of the unmilitary disposition natural both to old age and to a community which carried on its wars by deputy. He stands armed to guard Othello's chamber, but starts back in dismay when he sees that Othello, too, is armed (v. 2. 269). And when Othello has stabbed himself, his shocked exclamation, "All that 's spoke is marr'd," completely inverts the feeling of the modern spectator that this end was as right as it was inevitable.

Lodovico, a younger man, is a good example of the Venetian envoy or "civil servant," well-bred and courteous, but with energetic speech and action at command. When Othello strikes his wife in his presence, his protest goes to the utmost of what was possible, within the forms of good breeding, towards an offender in Othello's authoritative position.

The Duke and the Senator represent, in the Council scene, the astute "State" of Venice, as conceived in Elizabethan England. The situation with which they are confronted makes an unusual demand upon their statecraft, but they are equal to it. One suspects that every senator, including the Duke—despite his comment on Othello's tale—would have acted like Brabantio had his own daughter been in question. Before the culprit is identified, the

utmost severity of the law is promised to the vindictive father. But when he proves to be the indispensable general, the tone of the Court undergoes a marked though tacit change. The Duke now takes the lead in smoothing away the offence, and calls in his suavest platitudes to placate Brabantio, drawing on himself the merited irony of his retort. But the public business is urgent, the private quarrel is glossed over, the old father withdraws—to die of grief—while the famous general of the State is sent off post-hate to repel the national peril and succumb to the deadlier peril which awaits himself.

Montano, Othello's predecessor in the governorship of Cyprus, but still young, has served under him, and, like Cassio, admires and honors him. "The man commands like a full soldier" (ii. 1. 35). He is glad of Othello's appointment, and as anxious as Cassio for his safety in the storm. But he has nothing of Cassio's mercurial ardor. Venice ascribes to him a "gravity and stillness" rare at his years, while sagacious elders prize his wisdom. Cassio's failing, in an officer so highly placed, revolts his sense of political propriety even more than his sense of decorum. He joins in the drinking bout at some little risk to his high reputation, but is the first to call his comrades to their military duties, and he incurs his wound in trying to stop the fray. Othello, finding Cassio incapable of explaining matters, turns at once to Montano, as the man from whom the whole truth and nothing but the truth was most likely to be had, astonishing as it was to find him there:

> Worthy Montano, you were wont to be civil.

Even honest Iago might be too indulgent to a fellow-officer!

Bianca, Cassio's mistress, replaces two persons in Cinthio's tale—his wife, who is seen at her window copying the embroidery in Disdemona's handkerchief, and the courtesan to whom he is on his way when attacked by Iago. Shakespeare never introduces characters of this type except with a definite technical purpose in view, and the immense superiority of the drama at this point is beyond question. Cassio does not (like the Captain) recognize the handkerchief as Desdemona's. He cannot therefore try to return it, and quite naturally gives it to Bianca to be copied; while she, angrily suspecting it to be the gift of "some minx," returns it to him precisely at the moment when Othello and Iago are looking on (iv. 3. 151 *f.*). And Bianca was far more likely than his wife to provoke Cassio to those fleers and gibes and notable scorns (iv. 1. 83) which Othello is to interpret as the signs of his triumph over Des-

demona. For the rest, this courtesan is raised above the grossness of her occupation by her love for Cassio, egoistic, jealous, and vindictive as it is.

Were it not that an official jester was usually attached to the staff of great Elizabethan houses, and is thus not out of place in the household of the general of Venice, the Clown of this play might be described as the most perfunctory personage in the entire Shakespearean drama. It was a convention of the Elizabethan stage that there should be at least one low-comedy part in each play, no matter how serious; and Shakespeare, following the usual custom, in his maturer plays commonly gave this clownish character some real dramatic significance, as with the grave-digger in *Hamlet* and the Fool in *Lear*. But in *Othello* he does not seem to have been in the mood to make the Clown scenes anything but pure interludes, and they are very often omitted in presentations of the play.

§ 17. An attempt has been made in the foregoing paragraphs to sketch the lines of the transformation which Cinthio's tale underwent in the mind of Shakespeare. How was the great tragedy which resulted related to the other examples of his mature tragic art? In one point, the character of the hero, the question has been answered already (§ 7). But while Shakespeare's tragic heroes have certain constant traits, and, with all their wonderful diversity, can be grouped, his tragic plots, with all their individual excellence, seem to defy classification; and it remains to ask, finally, how the plot of *Othello* is related, as plot, to the rest.

In several of the tragedies the conflict—inner or outer—has a succession of phases. The hero and his party first triumph over all obstacles: Macbeth is crowned, Cæsar slain, Claudius is convicted of the murder. Then the opposing forces rally, and finally prevail. In these plays there is a culminating moment, usually in the third act, sometimes surpassing in interest the catastrophe at the close of the fifth, while the interval between these is usually of less absorbing power (cf. the fourth act of *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Julius Cæsar*, *King Lear*, with the third and fifth).[1] In *Othello* the structure is totally different. The tragic action proper begins only with the second act, and goes on with continuous and gathering intensity to the end. It is as if Macbeth first conceived his plot against Duncan at the close of the first act, and compassed his end by a protracted intrigue through the remainder of the play, to perish himself with his victim at the end. Instead of an action with two moments of

[1] On the devices by which Shakespeare meets the defects of this type of plot, cf. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 55 *f.*

nearly equal intensity, we have a main action ascending continuously to a final climax, preceded by a preparatory first act. There is nothing like this elsewhere in Shakespeare.

Moreover, this main action of *Othello* is distinguished among Shakespeare's plots by its simplicity and directness. It is his nearest approach to the "classical" severity of Sophocles and Racine. Hence, in part, its early popularity in France. *Macbeth* comes nearest in simplicity, but its course is not equally direct and continuous. It stands in still sharper contrast here with *Hamlet*, which preceded, and with *Lear*, which followed. In *Hamlet* and *Lear* Shakespeare resorts, for instance, with extraordinary effect, to those repetitions of the theme in another key which add so much to the charm of his comedies. Laertes's demeanor as the son of a murdered father serves as a burlesque foil to the tragic inaction of Hamlet. Gloucester's bodily torment at the hands of an ungrateful son accentuates the mental agony of Lear. There is nothing of this in the action proper of our play. From the landing in Cyprus onward, no other interest is allowed to conflict even remotely with the absorbing dread, indignation, and suspense excited by Iago's game. Cassio's dismissal moves our sympathy, but pity gives way to an acute anxiety when we realize that Desdemona's pleading for his reinstatement is to be the web which will fatally ensnare them both. Bianca and Roderigo count only as tools of Iago, and have no other value in the play. Even the public and military interest, promised at the outset by the menace of the Turkish attack, is promptly eliminated when its purpose has been served, and the agents and victims of the tragedy have been assembled at its scene in Cyprus. Even the desperate tempest, though vividly touched, is of value chiefly because, by disabling the Turkish fleet, it enables the Venetian general to come to the port where Desdemona and Iago await him.

But the first act has a quite different character. Not only are several distinct actions opened, any one of which might conceivably prove to be the dominant motive of the play, but the motive which is actually to dominate it is not announced, or even imagined, till the very close. Othello's secret marriage, Brabantio's vindictive passion, and his favor for the rejected Roderigo, seem to foreshadow a drama of intrigue between rival lovers. The Turkish menace and the post-haste dispatch of Othello suggest a drama in which, as in *Julius Cæsar*, the fortunes of the State are dramatically no less momentous than the fate of a man, while Iago, the real and sole initiator of the action which is to blot out all the rest, appears still a secondary figure, his formidable animosities already vaguely

stirring, but not yet projected into any determined scheme of action. The first act has thus almost the air of a little independent drama—a drama with an ironically happy ending; for the triumph of Othello in vindicating his marriage, and that of Desdemona in being allowed to accompany him, create the conditions which seal their doom.

If this were a complete statement of the relation between the first act and the sequel, the play would be liable to the damaging charge of falling into two parts rather loosely connected. But, in fact, every line of the first act has its function in the economy of the entire drama. Everything in it serves either (1) to bring about the conditions from which the tragic action is to spring, or (2) to make its course irresistible and its issue inevitable. To this second purpose some of Shakespeare's finest psychological artistry is devoted. Othello's account of his courtship effectually vindicates his marriage; but it also enables us to understand how such a union could be destroyed. His instant—nay joyous—response to the call of honorable duty, an hour after his marriage, foretells the husband who will later sacrifice his wife, doing "nought in hate, but all in honour." Desdemona's innocent boldness, in the courtship, in her defense of her love, and in her appeal to go to the campaign with Othello, prepares us for her dangerous importunity in demanding the reinstatement of Cassio. Roderigo, the fatuous discarded suitor, pursuing the runaway bride under Iago's astute direction, is already the compliant tool who will provoke Cassio in the drunken brawl or undertake to put him out of the way. And if Iago himself only at the close conceives his plot, the sinister power and absolute egoism of the man oppress the atmosphere from his very opening words; we know from the first that there is no design, however destructive, from which he will shrink, and no weapon, however deadly, that he will hesitate to use. The picture, finally, of the society and government of Venice, and of the position of Othello, at once flattering and insecure in relation to both, provides a setting and atmosphere to which this story of astute calculation, romantic attraction, and tragic misunderstanding is entirely congenial.

While *Othello* thus satisfies with extraordinary completeness the "classical" demand for structural unity and coherence, it does this in a way entirely true to the genius of Elizabethan dramatic art. If it is wanting in some favorite tragic motives—battles, madness, ghosts, spectacles, revenge—it has many other, often unobtrusive, links with the native stage. The sharp detachment of the first act in place and in time, the infusion of grim comedy, the foolery of the Clown, the murders on the stage, the catholicity of poetic range, from the acrid obscenities of Iago to the oriental splendor and

sibylline strangeness of Othello's imagination—in all this it is racy of the soil. The well-known story of the resentment roused in the first French audience that witnessed it[1] by the introduction of a *mouchoir* into tragedy symbolizes the amplitude of Shakespearean art, taking in at once the highest and the homeliest things, of which it is perhaps the supreme example.

§ 18. What, finally, does *Othello* contribute to our impression of the mind of Shakespeare? A daring question, but the critical interpreter must not decline it. We can at least put aside some mistaken conclusions about the poet, derived from mistaken ideas about the play—the idea of "poetic justice," for instance. A certain class of critics and readers insist on discovering a quasi-justification for Desdemona's tragedy. She is a warning against filial disobedience, or against marrying a member of another race. These trivialities have been seriously entertained.[2] The notion which underlies them is two-fold: (1) That the play represents a world dominated by a moral order, and (2) that this moral order asserts itself by satisfactions and sufferings proportional to good and evil conduct. The second is glaringly contradicted by the facts of the Shakespearean drama. In our play—putting Desdemona apart—who will measure the agony of Othello by the unwitting wrong he does—not in hate, but "all in honour"? The first is true within limits. Good and evil are not indifferent in the Shakespearean drama. Evil is a disturbing and anarchic element, and it finally perishes. The doom which overtakes his contrivers of harm has the air of reasserting the moral law they transgress. But we must not speak of any relation between suffering and wrongdoing. Innocence and goodness are crushed with evil; the result of the "overthrow of evil" may be a grievous destruction of good. Even the men who have brought on the calamities in which they perish may, by perishing, impoverish the capacity of the world for good. Not merely Hamlet and Lear, but Macbeth and Antony, leave behind them a society guided by men who may be free from their weakness but are without their towering strength and their appeal to something deeper and more potent in ourselves. In *Othello* this waste of goodness is as extreme as is the power and daring of evil. Iago may be handed over to unimaginable tortures, but the total result is a hideous and horrible triumph of evil under

[1] At the performance of de Vigny's version, October 24, 1829. The first performance, in 1792, did not offer this incident, the translator, Ducis, prudently substituting an intercepted letter for the offensive handkerchief.

[2] See Furness's New Variorum edition, pp. 422–28, 445.

an all-deceiving "honest" mask. Did Shakespeare feel in these facts the problem that perplexes the theological or philosophic idealist? Perhaps; but at least he never suggests its solution. Christian or theistic ideas, though occasionally alluded to, never have any part in the economy of the action or in coloring its issues. It is never hinted that this world, with its clashing discords, is a member of a larger whole where partial evil will prove to be universal good. As little does he suggest that the master force in these tragic calamities is a blind or malignant fate thrusting men to their doom. Yet, on the other hand, the intensity of ethical feeling which has gone to the creation of the harrowing conflicts of the great tragedies, most of all, perhaps, in our play, forbids us to think of him as lightly accepting, with the prosperous man's shrug of the shoulders, a world in which Iagos are produced and Desdemonas strangled, in which, for the rest, lawsuits were successful, and the Stratford tithes regularly paid. The creator of Shakespearean tragedy was in no danger of making light of the enormous power of men for mischief. But he saw, too, with unparalleled clearness, how this huge complex manifold nature of things, which produces Iagos and Gonerils, produces also Desdemonas and Cordelias, whose ineffable beauty of goodness shines out most clearly in and through their calamities; that their tragic doom does not lessen the worth for humanity of their having been; and that the human seed and soil in which such flowers bud and burgeon cannot be wholly void of the grounds of faith and hope.

OTHELLO

THE MOOR OF VENICE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Duke of Venice.
Brabantio, a Senator.
Other Senators.
Gratiano, brother to Brabantio.
Lodovico, kinsman to Brabantio.
Othello, a noble Moor in the service of the Venetian State.
Cassio, his lieutenant.
Iago, his ancient.
Roderigo, a Venetian gentleman.
Montano, Othello's predecessor in the government of Cyprus.
Clown, servant to Othello.

Desdemona, daughter to Brabantio and wife to Othello.
Emilia, wife to Iago.
Bianca, mistress to Cassio.

Sailor, Messenger, Herald, Officers, Gentlemen, Musicians and Attendants.

Scene—The first act in Venice; during the rest of the play, at seaport in Cyprus.

Historic Period: May, 1570

OTHELLO

THE MOOR OF VENICE

ACT I

Scene I — *Venice. A street*

Enter Roderigo *and* Iago

Rod. Tush! never tell me; I take it much unkindly
That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse
As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this.
Iago. 'Sblood, but you will not hear me:
If ever I did dream of such a matter
Abhor me.
Rod. Thou told'st me thou didst hold him in thy hate.
Iago. Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capp'd to him: and, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place:
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war;
And, in conclusion,
Nonsuits my mediators: for, "Certes," says he,
"I have already chose my officer."
And what was he?
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,

One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife;
That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoric,
Wherein the toged consuls can propose
As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,
In all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election:
And I, of whom his eyes had seen the proof
At Rhodes, at Cyprus and on other grounds
Christian and heathen, must be be-lee'd and calm'd
By debitor and creditor: this counter-caster,
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
And I — God bless the mark! — his Moorship's ancient.

Rod. By heaven, I rather would have been his hangman.

Iago. Why, there 's no remedy; 't is the curse of service,
Preferment goes by letter and affection,
And not by old gradation, where each second
Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
Whether I in any just term am affined
To love the Moor.

Rod. I would not follow him then.

Iago. O, sir, content you;
I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,

For nought but provender, and when he 's old, cashier'd:
Whip me such honest knaves. Others there are
Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them, and when they have lined their coats
Do themselves homage: these fellows have some soul;
And such a one do I profess myself. For, sir,
It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:
In following him, I follow but myself;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so, for my peculiar end:
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 't is not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at: I am not what I am.
Rod. What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe,
If he carry 't thus!
Iago. Call up her father,
Rouse him: make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen,
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on 't,
As it may lose some colour.
Rod. Here is her father's house; I 'll call aloud.
Iago. Do; with like timorous accent and dire yell

As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

Rod. What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho!

Iago. Awake! what, ho, Brabantio! thieves! thieves! thieves!
Look to your house, your daughter and your bags!
Thieves! thieves!

Brabantio *appears above, at a window*

Bra. What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

Rod. Signior, is all your family within?

Iago. Are your doors lock'd?

Bra. Why, wherefore ask you this?

Iago. 'Zounds, sir, you 're robb'd; for shame, put on your gown;
Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;
Even now, now, very now, arise, arise;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you:
Arise, I say.

Bra. What, have you lost your wits?

Rod. Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

Bra. Not I: what are you?

Rod. My name is Roderigo.

Bra. The worser welcome:
I have charged thee not to haunt about my doors:
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,
Being full of supper and distempering draughts,

Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come
To start my quiet.
Rod. Sir, sir, sir,—
Bra. But thou must needs be sure
My spirit and my place have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.
Rod. Patience, good sir.
Bra. What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is Venice;
My house is not a grange.
Rod. Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.
Iago. 'Zounds, sir, you are one of those that will not serve God, if the devil bid you. Because we come to do you service and you think we are ruffians, you 'll have your daughter covered with a Barbary horse; you' ll have your nephews neigh to you; you 'll have coursers for cousins and gennets for germans.
Bra. Thou art a villain.
Iago. You are — a senator.
Bra. This thou shalt answer; I know thee, Roderigo.
Rod. Sir, I will answer any thing. But, I beseech you,
If 't be your pleasure and most wise consent,
As partly I find it is, that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even and dull watch o' the night,
Transported, with no worse nor better guard
But with a knave of common hire, a góndolier,
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor, —
If this be known to you and your allowance,

We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;
But if you know not this, my manners tell me
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe
That, from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:
Your daughter, if you have not given her leave,
I say again, hath made a gross revolt;
Tying her duty, beauty, wit and fortunes
In an extravagant and wheeling stranger
Of here and every where. Straight satisfy yourself:
If she be in her chamber or your house,
Let loose on me the justice of the state
For thus deluding you.

Bra. Strike on the tinder, ho!
Give me a taper! call up all my people!
This accident is not unlike my dream:
Belief of it oppresses me already.
Light, I say! light! [*Exit above.*

Iago. Farewell; for I must leave you:
It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
To be produced — as, if I stay, I shall —
Against the Moor: for, I do know, the state,
However this may gall him with some check,
Cannot with safety cast him, for he 's embark'd
With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars,
Which even now stand in act, that, for their souls,
Another of his fathom they have none,
To lead their business: in which regard,
Though I do hate him as I do hell-pains,
Yet for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag and sign of love,

Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely find him,
Lead to the Sagittary the raised search;
And there will I be with him. So farewell. [*Exit.*

Enter, below, Brabantio, *in his night-gown, and* Servants *with torches*

Bra. It is too true an evil: gone she is;
And what 's to come of my despised time
Is nought but bitterness. Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her? O unhappy girl!
With the Moor, say'st thou? Who would be a father!
How didst thou know 't was she? O, she deceives me
Past thought! What said she to you? Get more tapers;
Raise all my kindred. Are they married, think you?
Rod. Truly, I think they are.
Bra. O heaven! How got she out? O treason of the blood!
Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act. Is there not charms
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abused? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing?
Rod. Yes, sir, I have indeed.
Bra. Call up my brother. O, would you had had her!
Some one way, some another. Do you know
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?
Rod. I think I can discover him, if you please
To get good guard and go along with me.
Bra. Pray you, lead on. At every house I 'll call;

I may command at most. Get weapons, ho!
And raise some special officers of night.
On, good Roderigo: I 'll deserve your pains. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *Another street*

Enter Othello, Iago, *and* Attendants *with torches*

Iago. Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff o' the conscience
To do no cóntrived murder: I lack iniquity
Sometimes to do me service: nine or ten times
I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the ribs.
Oth. 'T is better as it is.
Iago. Nay, but he prated,
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against your honour
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray you, sir,
Are you fast married? Be assured of this,
That the magnifico is much beloved,
And hath in his effect a voice potential
As double as the duke's: he will divorce you,
Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
The law, with all his might to enforce it on,
Will give him cable.
Oth. Let him do his spite:
My services which I have done the signiory
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'T is yet to know,—
Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,
I shall promulgate — I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege, and my demerits

May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune
As this that I have reach'd: for know, Iago,
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused free condition
Put into circumscription and confine
For the sea's worth. But, look! what lights come yond?

Iago. Those are the raised father and his friends:
You were best go in.

Oth. Not I: I must be found:
My parts, my title and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

Iago. By Janus, I think no.

Enter Cassio, *and certain* Officers *with torches*

Oth. The servants of the duke, and my lieutenant.
The goodness of the night upon you, friends!
What is the news?

Cas. The duke does greet you, general,
And he requires your haste-post-haste appearance,
Even on the instant.

Oth. What is the matter, think you?

Cas. Something from Cyprus, as I may divine:
It is a business of some heat: the galleys
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers
This very night at one another's heels,
And many of the consuls, raised and met,
Are at the duke's already: you have been hotly call'd for;
When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The senate hath sent about three several quests
To search you out.

Oth. 'T is well I am found by you.
I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you. [*Exit.*

Cas. Ancient, what makes he here?

Iago. 'Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carack:
If it prove lawful prize, he 's made for ever.

Cas. I do not understand.

Iago. He 's married.

Cas. To who?

Re-enter Othello

Iago. Marry, to — Come, captain, will you go?

Oth. Have with you.

Cas. Here comes another troop to seek for you.

Iago. It is Brabantio. General, be advised;
He comes to bad intent.

Enter Brabantio, Roderigo, *and* Officers *with torches and weapons*

Oth. Holla! stand there!

Rod. Signior, it is the Moor.

Bra. Down with him, thief!
[*They draw on both sides.*

Iago. You, Roderigo! come, sir, I am for you.

Oth. Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.
Good signior, you shall more command with years
Than with your weapons.

Bra. O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd my daughter?

Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her;
For I 'll refer me to all things of sense,
If she in chains of magic were not bound,
Whether a maid so tender, fair and happy,
So opposite to marriage that she shunn'd
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,
Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou, to fear, not to delight.
Judge me the world, if 't is not gross in sense
That thou hast practised on her with foul charms,
Abused her delicate youth with drugs or minerals
That weaken motion: I 'll have 't disputed on;
'T is probable and palpable to thinking.
I therefore apprehend and do attach thee
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of arts inhibited and out of warrant.
Lay hold upon him: if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.

Oth. Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining, and the rest:
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter. Where will you that I go
To answer this your charge?

Bra. To prison, till fit time
Of law and course of direct session
Call thee to answer.

Oth. What if I do obey?
How may the duke be therewith satisfied,
Whose messengers are here about my side,
Upon some present business of the state
To bring me to him?

First Off. 'T is true, most worthy signior;
The duke 's in council, and your noble self,
I am sure, is sent for.

Bra. How! the duke in council!
In this time of the night! Bring him away:
Mine 's not an idle cause: the duke himself,
Or any of my brothers of the state,
Cannot but feel this wrong as 't were their own;
For if such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III — *A council-chamber*

The Duke *and* Senators *sitting at a table;*
Officers *attending*

Duke. There is no composition in these news
That gives them credit.

First Sen. Indeed, they are disproportion'd;
My letters say a hundred and seven galleys.

Duke. And mine, a hundred and forty.

Sec. Sen. And mine, two hundred:
But though they jump not on a just account, —
As in these cases, where the aim reports,
'T is oft with difference — yet do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

Duke. Nay, it is possible enough to judgment:
I do not so secure me in the error,
But the main article I do approve
In fearful sense.

Sailor. [*Within*] What, ho! what, ho! what, ho!

First Off. A messenger from the galleys.

Enter a Sailor

Duke. Now, what 's the business?
Sail. The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes;
So was I bid report here to the state
By Signior Angelo.
Duke. How say you by this change?
First Sen. This cannot be,
By no assay of reason; 't is a pageant,
To keep us in false gaze. When we consider
The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk,
And let ourselves again but understand,
That as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,
So may he with more facile question bear it,
For that it stands not in such warlike brace,
But altogether lacks the abilities
That Rhodes is dress'd in: if we make thought of this,
We must not think the Turk is so unskilful
To leave that latest which concerns him first,
Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain,
To wake and wage a danger profitless.
Duke. Nay, in all confidence, he 's not for Rhodes.
First Off. Here is more news.

Enter a Messenger

Mess. The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
Steering with due course towards the isle of Rhodes,
Have there injointed them with an after fleet.
First Sen. Ay, so I thought. How many, as you guess?
Mess. Of thirty sail: and now they do re-stem
Their backward course, bearing with frank appearance

Their purposes toward Cyprus. Signior Montano,
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,
With his free duty recommends you thus,
And prays you to believe him.
Duke. 'T is certain, then, for Cyprus.
Marcus Luccicos, is not he in town?
First Sen. He 's now in Florence.
Duke. Write from us to him; post-post-haste dispatch.
First Sen. Here comes Brabantio and the valiant Moor.

Enter Brabantio, Othello, Iago, Roderigo, *and* Officers

Duke. Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you
Against the general enemy Ottoman.
[*To Brabantio*] I did not see you; welcome, gentle signior;
We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.
Bra. So did I yours. Good your grace, pardon me;
Neither my place nor aught I heard of business
Hath raised me from my bed, nor doth the general care
Take hold on me, for my particular grief
Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature
That it engluts and swallows other sorrows
And it is still itself.
Duke. Why, what 's the matter?
Bra. My daughter! O, my daughter!
Duke and Sen. Dead?
Bra. Ay, to me;

She is abused, stol'n from me, and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks
For nature so preposterously to err,
Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,
Sans witchcraft could not.

Duke. Whoe'er he be that in this foul proceeding
Hath thus beguiled your daughter of herself
And you of her, the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter
After your own sense, yea, though our proper son
Stood in your action.

Bra. Humbly I thank your grace.
Here is the man, this Moor, whom now, it seems,
Your special mandate for the state-affairs
Hath hither brought.

Duke and Sen. We are very sorry for 't.

Duke. [*To Othello*] What, in your own part, can you say to this?

Bra. Nothing, but this is so.

Oth. Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approved good masters,
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her:
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,
And little bless'd with the soft phrase of peace:
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have used
Their dearest action in the tented field;
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle,
And therefore little shall I grace my cause

In speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious
patience,
I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what
charms,
What conjuration and what mighty magic —
For such proceeding I am charged withal —
I won his daughter.
Bra. A maiden never bold;
Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
Blush'd at herself; and she — in spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, every thing —
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on!
It is a judgement maim'd and most imperfect
That will confess perfection so could err
Against all rules of nature, and must be driven
To find out practices of cunning hell,
Why this should be. I therefore vouch again
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjured to this effect,
He wrought upon her.
Duke. To vouch this, is no proof,
Without more wider and more overt test
Than these thin habits and poor likelihoods
Of modern seeming do prefer against him.
First Sen. But, Othello, speak:
Did you by indirect and forced courses
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?
Or came it by request and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth!
Oth. I do beseech you,
Send for the lady to the Sagittary,

And let her speak of me before her father:
If you do find me foul in her report,
The trust, the office I do hold of you,
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even fall upon my life.

Duke. Fetch Desdemona hither.

Oth. Ancient, conduct them: you best know the place. [*Exeunt Iago and Attendants.*

And, till she come, as truly as to heaven
I do confess the vices of my blood,
So justly to your grave ears I 'll present
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,
And she in mine.

Duke. Say it, Othello.

Oth. Her father loved me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have pass'd.
I ran it through, even from my boyish days,
To the very moment that he bade me tell it;
Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field,
Of hair-breadth scapes i' the imminent deadly breach,
Of being taken by the insolent foe
And sold to slavery, of my redemption thence
And portance in my travels' history:
Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks and hills whose heads touch heaven,
It was my hint to speak, — such was the process:
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads

Do grow beneath their shoulders. This to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline:
But still the house-affairs would draw her thence:
Which ever as she could with haste dispatch,
She 'ld come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse: which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour, and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intentively: I did consent,
And often did beguile her of her tears,
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs:
She swore, in faith, 't was strange, 't was passing strange,
'T was pitiful, 't was wondrous pitiful:
She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man: she thank'd me,
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake:
She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd,
And I loved her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have used:
Here comes the lady; let her witness it.

Enter Desdemona, Iago, *and* attendants

Duke. I think this tale would win my daughter too.

Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best:
Men do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands.
Bra. I pray you, hear her speak:
If she confess that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head, if my bad blame
Light on the man! Come hither, gentle mistress:
Do you perceive in all this noble company
Where most you owe obedience?
Des. My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty:
To you I am bound for life and education;
My life and education both do learn me
How to respect you; you are the lord of duty;
I am hitherto your daughter: but here 's my husband,
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor my lord.
Bra. God be wi' you! I have done.
Please it your grace, on to the state-affairs:
I had rather to adopt a child than get it.
Come hither, Moor:
I here do give thee that with all my heart
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee. For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child;
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them. I have done, my lord.

Duke. Let me speak like yourself, and lay a sentence,
Which, as a grise or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.
When remedies are past, the griefs are ended
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
What cannot be preserved when fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mockery makes.
The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

Bra. So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile;
We lose it not, so long as we can smile.
He bears the sentence well that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he hears,
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow
That, to pay grief, must of patience borrow.
These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal:
But words are words; I never yet did hear
That the bruised heart was pierced through the ear.
I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of state.

Duke. The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus. Othello, the fortitude of the place is best known to you; and though we have there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer voice on you: you must therefore be content to slubber the gloss of your new fortunes with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

Oth. The tyrant custom, most grave senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down: I do agnize
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness, and do undertake
These present wars against the Ottomites.
Most humbly therefore bending to your state,
I crave fit disposition for my wife,
Due reference of place and exhibition,
With such accommodation and besort
As levels with her breeding.
Duke. If you please,
Be 't at her father's.
Bra. I 'll not have it so.
Oth. Nor I.
Des. Nor I; I would not there reside,
To put my father in impatient thoughts
By being in his eye. Most gracious duke,
To my unfolding lend your prosperous ear,
And let me find a charter in your voice,
To assist my simpleness.
Duke. What would you, Desdemona?
Des. That I did love the Moor to live with him,
My downright violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world: my heart's subdued
Even to the very quality of my lord:
I saw Othello's visage in his mind,
And to his honours and his valiant parts
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,

The rites for which I love him are bereft me,
And I a heavy interim shall support
By his dear absence. Let me go with him.
Oth. Let her have your voices.
Vouch with me, heaven, I therefore beg it not,
To please the palate of my appetite,
Nor to comply with heat — the young affects
In me defunct — and proper satisfaction,
But to be free and bounteous to her mind:
And heaven defend your good souls, that you think
I will your serious and great business scant
For she is with me: no, when light-wing'd toys
Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dullness
My speculative and officed instruments,
That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
And all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation!
Duke. Be it as you shall privately determine,
Either for her stay or going: the affair cries haste,
And speed must answer it.
First Sen. You must away to-night.
Oth. With all my heart.
Duke. At nine i' the morning here we 'll meet again.
Othello, leave some officer behind,
And he shall our commission bring to you;
With such things else of quality and respect
As doth import you.
Oth. So please your grace, my ancient;
A man he is of honesty and trust:
To his conveyance I assign my wife,

With what else needful your good grace shall think
To be sent after me.
Duke. Let it be so.
Good night to every one. [*To Brab.*] And, noble signior,
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.
First Sen. Adieu, brave Moor; use Desdemona well.
Bra. Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see:
She has deceived her father, and may thee.
[*Exeunt Duke, Senators, Officers, &c.*
Oth. My life upon her faith! Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee:
I prithee, let thy wife attend on her;
And bring them after in the best advantage.
Come, Desdemona: I have but an hour
Of love, of worldly matters and direction,
To spend with thee: we must obey the time.
[*Exeunt Othello and Desdemona.*
Rod. Iago, —
Iago. What say'st thou, noble heart?
Rod. What will I do, thinkest thou?
Iago. Why, go to bed, and sleep.
Rod. I will incontinently drown myself.
Iago. If thou dost, I shall never love thee after. Why, thou silly gentleman!
Rod. It is silliness to live when to live is torment; and then have we a prescription to die when death is our physician.
Iago. O villanous! I have looked upon the world for four times seven years; and since I could distin-

guish betwixt a benefit and an injury, I never found man that knew how to love himself. Ere I would say I would drown myself for the love of a guinea-hen, I would change my humanity with a baboon.

Rod. What should I do? I confess it is my shame to be so fond; but it is not in my virtue to amend it. 321

Iago. Virtue! a fig! 't is in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our bodies are gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners; so that if we will plant nettles or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs or distract it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness or manured with industry, why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills. If the balance of our lives had not one scale of reason to poise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions: but we have reason to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts, whereof I take this that you call love to be a sect or scion. 337

Rod. It cannot be.

Iago. It is merely a lust of the blood and a permission of the will. Come, be a man. Drown thyself! drown cats and blind puppies. I have professed me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness; I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse; follow thou the wars; defeat thy favour with an usurped beard; I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor — put money in thy purse — nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement, and

thou shalt see an answerable sequestration; — put but money in thy purse. These Moors are changeable in their wills: — fill thy purse with money: — the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida. She must change for youth: when she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice: she must have change, she must: therefore put money in thy purse. If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning. Make all the money thou canst: if sanctimony and a frail vow betwixt an erring barbarian and a supersubtle Venetian be not too hard for my wits and all the tribe of hell, thou shalt enjoy her; therefore make money. A pox of drowning thyself! it is clean out of the way: seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy than to be drowned and go without her.

Rod. Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend on the issue?

Iago. Thou art sure of me: go, make money: I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor: my cause is hearted; thine hath no less reason. Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him: if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport. There are many events in the womb of time which will be delivered. Traverse! go; provide thy money. We will have more of this to-morrow. Adieu.

Rod. Where shall we meet i' the morning?

Iago. At my lodging.

Rod. I 'll be with thee betimes.

Iago. Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

Rod. What say you?
Iago. No more of drowning, do you hear?
Rod. I am changed: I 'll go sell all my land. [*Exit.*
Iago. Thus do I ever make my fool my purse;
For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,
If I would time expend with such a snipe,
But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor;
And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets
He has done my office: I know not if 't be true;
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do as if for surety. He holds me well;
The better shall my purpose work on him.
Cassio 's a proper man: let me see now:
To get his place and to plume up my will
In double knavery — How, how? — Let 's see: —
After some time, to abuse Othello's ear
That he is too familiar with his wife.
He hath a person and a smooth dispose
To be suspected, framed to make women false.
The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,
And will as tenderly be led by the nose
As asses are.
I have 't. It is engender'd. Hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.
[*Exit.*

ACT II

Scene I — *A Sea-port in Cyprus. An open place near the quay*

Enter Montano *and two* Gentlemen

Mon. What from the cape can you discern at sea?
First Gent. Nothing at all: it is a high-wrought flood;
I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,
Descry a sail.
Mon. Methinks the wind hath spoke aloud at land;
A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements:
If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,
Can hold the mortise? What shall we hear of this?
Sec. Gent. A segregation of the Turkish fleet:
For do but stand upon the foaming shore,
The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds;
The wind-shaked surge, with high and monstrous mane,
Seems to cast water on the burning bear,
And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole:
I never did like molestation view
On the enchafed flood.
Mon. If that the Turkish fleet
Be not enshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd;
It is impossible they bear it out.

Enter a third Gentleman

Third Gent. News, lads! our wars are done.
The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks,

That their designment halts: a noble ship of Venice
Hath seen a grievous wreck and suffrance
On most part of their fleet.
Mon. How! is this true?
Third Gent. The ship is here put in,
A Veronesa; Michael Cassio,
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor Othello,
Is come on shore: the Moor himself at sea,
And is in full commission here for Cyprus.
Mon. I am glad on 't: 't is a worthy governor.
Third Gent. But this same Cassio, though he speak of comfort
Touching the Turkish loss, yet he looks sadly,
And prays the Moor be safe; for they were parted
With foul and violent tempest.
Mon. Pray heavens he be;
For I have served him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier. Let 's to the seaside, ho!
As well to see the vessel that 's come in
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello,
Even till we make the main and the aerial blue
An indistinct regard.
Third Gent. Come, let 's do so;
For every minute is expectancy
Of more arrivance.

Enter Cassio

Cas. Thanks, you the valiant of this warlike isle,
That so approve the Moor! O, let the heavens
Give him defence against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea.
Mon. Is he well shipp'd?
Cas. His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot

Of very expert and approved allowance;
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure.

[*A cry within* "A sail, a sail, a sail!"

Enter a fourth Gentleman

Cas. What noise?

Fourth Gent. The town is empty; on the brow o' the sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry "A sail!"

Cas. My hopes do shape him for the governor.

[*Guns heard.*

Sec. Gent. They do discharge their shot of courtesy:
Our friends at least.

Cas. I pray you, sir, go forth,
And give us truth who 't is that is arrived.

Sec. Gent. I shall. [*Exit.*

Mon. But, good lieutenant, is your general wived?

Cas. Most fortunately: he hath achieved a maid
That paragons description and wild fame;
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,
And in the essential vesture of creation
Does tire the ingener.

Re-enter second Gentleman

How now! who has put in?

Sec. Gent. 'T is one Iago, ancient to the general.

Cas. Has had most favourable and happy speed:
Tempests themselves, high seas and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks and congregated sands, —
Traitors ensteep'd to clog the guiltless keel, —
As having sense of beauty, do omit

Their mortal natures, letting go safely by
The divine Desdemona.

Mon. What is she?

Cas. She that I spake of, our great captain's captain,
Left in the conduct of the bold Iago,
Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts
A se'nnight's speed. Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath,
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,
And bring all Cyprus comfort!

Enter Desdemona, Emilia, Iago, Roderigo, *and* Attendants

O, behold,
The riches of the ship is come on shore!
Ye men of Cyprus, let her have your knees.
Hail to thee, lady! and the grace of heaven,
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round!

Des. I thank you, valiant Cassio.
What tidings can you tell me of my lord?

Cas. He is not yet arrived: nor know I aught
But that he 's well and will be shortly here.

Des. O, but I fear — How lost you company?

Cas. The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship — But, hark! a sail.

[*A cry within* "A sail, a sail!" *Guns heard.*

Sec. Gent. They give their greeting to the citadel:
This likewise is a friend.

Cas. See for the news. [*Exit Gentleman.*
Good ancient, you are welcome. [*To Emilia*] Welcome, mistress:
Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
That I extend my manners; 't is my breeding
That gives me this bold show of courtesy.
[*Kissing her.*

Iago. Sir, would she give you so much of her lips
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
You 'ld have enough.

Des. Alas, she has no speech.

Iago. In faith, too much;
I find it still, when I have list to sleep:
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,
She puts her tongue a little in her heart,
And chides with thinking.

Emil. You have little cause to say so.

Iago. Come on, come on; you are pictures out of doors,
Bells in your parlours, wild-cats in your kitchens,
Saints in your injuries, devils being offended,
Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds.

Des. O, fie upon thee, slanderer!

Iago. Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk:
You rise to play and go to bed to work.

Emil. You shall not write my praise.

Iago. No, let me not.

Des. What wouldst thou write of me, if thou shouldst praise me?

Iago. O gentle lady, do not put me to 't;
For I am nothing, if not critical.

Des. Come on, assay — There's one gone to the harbour?

Iago. Ay, madam.

Des. I am not merry; but I do beguile
The thing I am by seeming otherwise.
Come, how wouldst thou praise me?

Iago. I am about it; but indeed my invention
Comes from my pate as birdlime does from frize;
It plucks out brains and all: but my Muse labours,
And thus she is deliver'd.
If she be fair and wise, fairness and wit,
The one's for use, the other useth it.

Des. Well praised! How if she be black and witty?

Iago. If she be black, and thereto have a wit,
She 'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

Des. Worse and worse.

Emil. How if fair and foolish?

Iago. She never yet was foolish that was fair;
For even her folly help'd her to an heir.

Des. These are old fond paradoxes to make fools laugh i' the alehouse. What miserable praise hast thou for her that 's foul and foolish?

Iago. There 's none so foul and foolish thereunto,
But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

Des. O heavy ignorance! thou praisest the worst best. But what praise couldst thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed, one that, in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?

Iago. She that was ever fair and never proud,
Had tongue at will and yet was never loud,

Never lack'd gold and yet went never gay,
Fled from her wish and yet said "Now I may,"
She that being anger'd, her revenge being nigh,
Bade her wrong stay and her displeasure fly,
She that in wisdom never was so frail
To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail,
She that could think and ne'er disclose her mind,
See suitors following and not look behind,
She was a wight, if ever such wight were, —

Des. To do what? 160

Iago. To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.

Des. O most lame and impotent conclusion! Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband. How say you, Cassio? is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor?

Cas. He speaks home, madam: you may relish him more in the soldier than in the scholar. 167

Iago. [*Aside*] He takes her by the palm: ay, well said, whisper: with as little a web as this will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do; I will gyve thee in thine own courtship. You say true; 't is so, indeed: if such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kissed your three fingers so oft, which now again you are most apt to play the sir in. Very good; well kissed! an excellent courtesy! 't is so, indeed. Yet again your fingers to your lips? would they were clyster-pipes for your sake! [*Trumpet within.*] The Moor! I know his trumpet.

Cas. 'T is truly so. 181

Des. Let 's meet him and receive him.

Cas. Lo, where he comes!

Enter Othello *and* Attendants

Oth. O my fair warrior!
Des. My dear Othello!
Oth. It gives me wonder great as my content
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!
If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas
Olympus-high and duck again as low
As hell 's from heaven! If it were now to die,
'T were now to be most happy; for I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.
Des. The heavens forbid
But that our loves and comforts should increase,
Even as our days do grow!
Oth. Amen to that, sweet powers!
I cannot speak enough of this content;
It stops me here; it is too much of joy:
And this, and this, the greatest discords be
[*Kissing her.*
That e'er our hearts shall make!
Iago. [*Aside*] O, you are well tuned now!
But I 'll set down the pegs that make this music,
As honest as I am.
Oth. Come, let us to the castle.
News, friends; our wars are done, the Turks are drown'd.
How does my old acquaintance of this isle?
Honey, you shall be well desired in Cyprus;

I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet,
I prattle out of fashion, and I dote
In mine own comforts. I prithee, good Iago,
Go to the bay and disembark my coffers:
Bring thou the master to the citadel;
He is a good one, and his worthiness
Does challenge much respect. Come, Desdemona,
Once more, well met at Cyprus.

[*Exeunt Othello, Desdemona, and Attendants.*

Iago. Do thou meet me presently at the harbour. Come hither. If thou be'st valiant, — as, they say, base men being in love have then a nobility in their natures more than is native to them, — list me. The lieutenant to-night watches on the court of guard. First, I must tell thee this: Desdemona is directly in love with him.

Rod. With him! why, 't is not possible.

Iago. Lay thy finger thus, and let thy soul be instructed. Mark me with what violence she first loved the Moor, but for bragging and telling her fantastical lies: and will she love him still for prating? let not thy discreet heart think it. Her eye must be fed; and what delight shall she have to look on the devil? When the blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should be, again to inflame it and to give satiety a fresh appetite, loveliness in favour, sympathy in years, manners and beauties; all which the Moor is defective in: now, for want of these required conveniences, her delicate tenderness will find itself abused, begin to heave the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor; very nature will instruct her in it and compel her to some second choice. Now,

sir, this granted, — as it is a most pregnant and unforced position — who stands so eminent in the degree of this fortune as Cassio does? a knave very voluble; no further conscionable than in putting on the mere form of civil and humane seeming, for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden loose affection? why, none; why, none: a slipper and subtle knave, a finder of occasions, that has an eye can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true advantage never present itself; a devilish knave. Besides, the knave is handsome, young, and hath all those requisites in him that folly and green minds look after: a pestilent complete knave; and the woman hath found him already.

Rod. I cannot believe that in her; she 's full of most blessed condition.

Iago. Blessed fig's-end! the wine she drinks is made of grapes: if she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor. Blessed pudding! Didst thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? didst not mark that?

Rod. Yes, that I did; but that was but courtesy.

Iago. Lechery, by this hand; an index and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips that their breaths embraced together. Villanous thoughts, Roderigo! when these mutualities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, the incorporate conclusion. Pish! But, sir, be you ruled by me: I have brought you from Venice. Watch you to-night; for the command, I 'll lay 't upon you. Cassio knows you not. I 'll not be far from you:

do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline; or from what other course you please, which the time shall more favourably minister.

Rod. Well.

Iago. Sir, he is rash and very sudden in choler, and haply may strike at you: provoke him, that he may; for even out of that will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny; whose qualification shall come into no true taste again but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires by the means I shall then have to prefer them; and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

Rod. I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

Iago. I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel: I must fetch his necessaries ashore. Farewell.

Rod. Adieu. [*Exit.*

Iago. That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it;
That she loves him, 't is apt and of great credit:
The Moor, howbeit that I endure him not,
Is of a constant, loving, noble nature,
And I dare think he 'll prove to Desdemona
A most dear husband. Now, I do love her too;
Not out of absolute lust, though peradventure
I stand accountant for as great a sin,
But partly led to diet my revenge,
For that I do suspect the lusty Moor
Hath leap'd into my seat; the thought whereof

Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards;
And nothing can or shall content my soul
Till I am even'd with him, wife for wife,
Or failing so, yet that I put the Moor
At least into a jealousy so strong
That judgement cannot cure. Which thing to do,
If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trash
For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,
I 'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip,
Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb —
For I fear Cassio with my night-cap too —
Make the Moor thank me, love me and reward me,
For making him egregiously an ass
And practising upon his peace and quiet
Even to madness. 'T is here, but yet confused.
Knavery's plain face is never seen till used. [*Exit.*

Scene II — *A street*

Enter a Herald *with a proclamation;* People *following*

Her. It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere perdition of the Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph; some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him: for, besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptial. So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices are open, and there is full liberty of feasting from this present hour of five till the bell have told eleven. Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus and our noble general Othello! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III — *A hall in the castle*

Enter Othello, Desdemona, Cassio, *and* Attendants

Oth. Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night:
Let 's teach ourselves that honourable stop,
Not to outsport discretion.

Cas. Iago hath direction what to do;
But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye
Will I look to 't.

Oth. Iago is most honest.
Michael, good night: to-morrow with your earliest
Let me have speech with you. [*To Desdemona*]
Come, my dear love,
The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue;
That profit 's yet to come 'tween me and you.
Good night.

[*Exeunt Othello, Desdemona, and Attendants.*

Enter Iago

Cas. Welcome, Iago; we must to the watch.

Iago. Not this hour, lieutenant; 't is not yet ten o' the clock. Our general cast us thus early for the love of his Desdemona; who let us not therefore blame: he hath not yet made wanton the night with her; and she is sport for Jove.

Cas. She 's a most exquisite lady.

Iago. And, I 'll warrant her, full of game.

Cas. Indeed, she 's a most fresh and delicate creature.

Iago. What an eye she has! methinks it sounds a parley of provocation.

Cas. An inviting eye; and yet methinks right modest.

Iago. And when she speaks, is it not an alarum to love?

Cas. She is indeed perfection.

Iago. Well, happiness to their sheets! Come, lieutenant, I have a stoup of wine; and here without are a brace of Cyprus gallants that would fain have a measure to the health of black Othello.

Cas. Not to-night, good Iago: I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking: I could well wish courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

Iago. O, they are our friends; but one cup: I 'll drink for you.

Cas. I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified too, and, behold, what innovation it makes here: I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

Iago. What, man! 't is a night of revels: the gallants desire it.

Cas. Where are they?

Iago. Here at the door; I pray you, call them in.

Cas. I 'll do 't; but it dislikes me. [*Exit.*

Iago. If I can fasten but one cup upon him,
With that which he hath drunk to-night already,
He 'll be as full of quarrel and offence
As my young mistress' dog. Now, my sick fool Roderigo,
Whom love hath turn'd almost the wrong side out,

To Desdemona hath to-night caroused
Potations pottle-deep; and he 's to watch:
Three lads of Cyprus, noble swelling spirits,
That hold their honours in a wary distance,
The very elements of this warlike isle,
Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups,
And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of drunkards,
Am I to put our Cassio in some action
That may offend the isle. — But here they come:
If consequence do but approve my dream,
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

Re-enter CASSIO; *with him* MONTANO *and* Gentlemen; Servants *following with wine*

Cas. 'Fore God, they have given me a rouse already.

Mon. Good faith, a little one; not past a pint, as I am a soldier.

Iago. Some wine, ho!

[*Sings*] And let me the canakin clink, clink;
And let me the canakin clink:
A soldier's a man;
A life's but a span;
Why, then, let a soldier drink.
Some wine, boys!

Cas. 'Fore God, an excellent song.

Iago. I learned it in England, where, indeed, they are most potent in potting: your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander — Drink, ho! — are nothing to your English.

Cas. Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking?

Iago. Why, he drinks you, with facility, your Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain; he gives your Hollander a vomit, ere the next pottle can be filled.

Cas. To the health of our general!

Mon. I am for it, lieutenant; and I 'll do you justice.

Iago. O sweet England! 91

King Stephen was a worthy peer,
His breeches cost him but a crown;
He held them sixpence all too dear,
With that he call'd the tailor lown.
He was a wight of high renown,
And thou art but of low degree:
'T is pride that pulls the country down;
Then take thine auld cloak about thee.

Some wine, ho! 100

Cas. Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.

Iago. Will you hear 't again?

Cas. No; for I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things. Well, God's above all; and there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

Iago. It 's true, good lieutenant.

Cas. For mine own part, — no offence to the general, nor any man of quality, — I hope to be saved. 111

Iago. And so do I too, lieutenant.

Cas. Ay, but, by your leave, not before me; the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient. Let 's

have no more of this; let 's to our affairs. God forgive us our sins! Gentlemen, let 's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk: this is my ancient; this is my right hand, and this is my left: I am not drunk now; I can stand well enough, and speak well enough.

All. Excellent well.

Cas. Why, very well then; you must not think then that I am drunk. [*Exit.*

Mon. To the platform, masters; come, let 's set the watch.

Iago. You see this fellow that is gone before;
He is a soldier fit to stand by Cæsar
And give direction: and do but see his vice;
'T is to his virtue a just equinox,
The one as long as the other: 't is pity of him.
I fear the trust Othello puts him in,
On some odd time of his infirmity,
Will shake this island.

Mon. But is he often thus?

Iago. 'T is evermore the prologue to his sleep:
He 'll watch the horologe a double set,
If drink rock not his cradle.

Mon. It were well
The general were put in mind of it.
Perhaps he sees it not, or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,
And looks not on his evils: is not this true?

Enter Roderigo

Iago. [*Aside to him*] How now, Roderigo!
I pray you, after the lieutenant; go. [*Exit Roderigo.*

Mon. And 't is great pity that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place as his own second
With one of an ingraft infirmity:
It were an honest action to say
So to the Moor.

Iago. Not I, for this fair island:
I do love Cassio well; and would do much
To cure him of this evil — But, hark! what noise?
[*Cry within:* "Help! help!"

Re-enter Cassio, *driving in* Roderigo

Cas. You rogue! you rascal!

Mon. What 's the matter, lieutenant?

Cas. A knave teach me my duty! 151
I 'll beat the knave into a twiggen bottle.

Rod. Beat me!

Cas. Dost thou prate, rogue? [*Striking Roderigo.*

Mon. Nay, good lieutenant; I pray you, sir, hold your hand. [*Staying him.*

Cas. Let me go, sir, or I 'll knock you o'er the mazzard.

Mon. Come, come, you 're drunk.

Cas. Drunk! [*They fight.*

Iago. [*Aside to Roderigo*] Away, I say; go out, and cry a mutiny. [*Exit Roderigo.*
Nay, good lieutenant! — God's will, gentlemen; —
Help, ho! — Lieutenant, — sir, — Montano, — sir; —
Help, masters! — Here 's a goodly watch indeed!
[*A bell rings.*
Who 's that which rings the bell? — Diablo, ho!
The town will rise: God 's will, lieutenant, hold!
You will be shamed for ever.

Re-enter OTHELLO *and* Attendants

Oth. What is the matter here?

Mon. 'Zounds, I bleed still; I am hurt to the death. [*Faints.*

Oth. Hold, for your lives!

Iago. Hold, ho! Lieutenant, — sir, — Montano, —gentlemen,—
Have you forgot all sense of place and duty?
Hold! the general speaks to you; hold, hold, for shame!

Oth. Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth this?
Are we turn'd Turks, and to ourselves do that
Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?
For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl:
He that stirs next to carve for his own rage
Holds his soul light; he dies upon his motion.
Silence that dreadful bell: it frights the isle
From her propriety. What is the matter, masters?
Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,
Speak, who began this? on thy love, I charge thee.

Iago. I do not know: friends all but now, even now,
In quarter, and in terms like bride and groom
Devesting them for bed; and then, but now,
As if some planet had unwitted men,
Swords out, and tilting one at other's breast,
In opposition bloody. I cannot speak
Any beginning to this peevish odds;
And would in action glorious I had lost
Those legs that brought me to a part of it!

Oth. How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot?
Cas. I pray you, pardon me; I cannot speak.
Oth. Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil;
The gravity and stillness of your youth
The world hath noted, and your name is great
In mouths of wisest censure: what 's the matter,
That you unlace your reputation thus
And spend your rich opinion for the name
Of a night-brawler? give me answer to it.
Mon. Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger:
Your officer, Iago, can inform you —
While I spare speech, which something now offends me —
Of all that I do know: nor know I aught
By me that 's said or done amiss this night;
Unless self-charity be sometimes a vice,
And to defend ourselves it be a sin
When violence assails us.
Oth. Now, by heaven,
My blood begins my safer guides to rule;
And passion, having my best judgement collied,
Assays to lead the way: if I once stir,
Or do but lift this arm, the best of you
Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know
How this foul rout began, who set it on;
And he that is approved in this offence,
Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
Shall lose me. What! in a town of war,
Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,
To manage private and domestic quarrel,
In night, and on the court and guard of safety:
'T is monstrous. Iago, who began 't?

Mon. If partially affined, or leagued in office,
Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,
Thou art no soldier.
Iago. Touch me not so near:
I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio;
Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth
Shall nothing wrong him. Thus it is, general.
Montano and myself being in speech,
There comes a fellow crying out for help;
And Cassio following him with determined sword,
To execute upon him. Sir, this gentleman
Steps in to Cassio and entreats his pause:
Myself the crying fellow did pursue,
Lest by his clamour — as it so fell out —
The town might fall in fright: he, swift of foot,
Outran my purpose; and I return'd the rather
For that I heard the clink and fall of swords,
And Cassio high in oath; which till to-night
I ne'er might say before. When I came back —
For this was brief — I found them close together,
At blow and thrust; even as again they were
When you yourself did part them.
More of this matter cannot I report:
But men are men; the best sometimes forget:
Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,
As men in rage strike those that wish them best,
Yet surely Cassio, I believe, received
From him that fled some strange indignity,
Which patience could not pass.
Oth. I know, Iago,
Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,

Making it light to Cassio. Cassio, I love thee;
But never more be officer of mine.

Re-enter Desdemona, *attended*

Look, if my gentle love be not raised up!
I 'll make thee an example.

Des. What 's the matter?

Oth. All 's well now, sweeting; come away to bed.
Sir, for your hurts, myself will be your surgeon:
Lead him off. [*To Montano, who is led off.*
Iago, look with care about the town,
And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted.
Come, Desdemona: 't is the soldiers' life
To have their balmy slumbers waked with strife.

[*Exeunt all but Iago and Cassio.*

Iago. What, are you hurt, lieutenant?

Cas. Ay, past all surgery.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid!

Cas. Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I have lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is bestial. My reputation, Iago, my reputation!

Iago. As I am an honest man, I thought you had received some bodily wound; there is more sense in that than in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most false imposition: oft got without merit, and lost without deserving: you have lost no reputation at all, unless you repute yourself such a loser. What, man! there are ways to recover the general again: you are but now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy than in malice; even so as one would beat his offenceless dog to affright an imperious lion: sue to him again, and he 's yours.

Cas. I will rather sue to be despised than to deceive so good a commander with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? and speak parrot? and squabble? swagger? swear? and discourse fustian with one's own shadow? O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil!

Iago. What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

Cas. I know not.

Iago. Is 't possible?

Cas. I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore. O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, pleasance, revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

Iago. Why, but you are now well enough: how came you thus recovered?

Cas. It hath pleased the devil drunkenness to give place to the devil wrath: one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

Iago. Come, you are too severe a moraler: as the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

Cas. I will ask him for my place again; he shall tell me I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and pres-

ently a beast! O strange! Every inordinate cup is unblessed and the ingredient is a devil. 312

Iago. Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used: exclaim no more against it. And, good lieutenant, I think you think I love you.

Cas. I have well approved it, sir. I drunk!

Iago. You or any man living may be drunk at some time, man. I 'll tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general: I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement of her parts and graces: confess yourself freely to her; importune her help to put you in your place again: she is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested: this broken joint between you and her husband entreat her to splinter; and, my fortunes against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before. 331

Cas. You advise me well.

Iago. I protest, in the sincerity of love and honest kindness.

Cas. I think it freely; and betimes in the morning I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me: I am desperate of my fortunes if they check me here.

Iago. You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant; I must to the watch. 340

Cas. Good night, honest Iago. [*Exit.*

Iago. And what 's he then that says I play the villain?

When this advice is free I give and honest,
Probal to thinking, and indeed the course
To win the Moor again? For 't is most easy
The inclining Desdemona to subdue
In any honest suit: she 's framed as fruitful
As the free elements. And then for her
To win the Moor — were 't to renounce his baptism,
All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,
His soul is so enfetter'd to her love,
That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
Even as her appetite shall play the god
With his weak function. How am I then a villain
To counsel Cassio to this parallel course,
Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!
When devils will the blackest sins put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,
As I do now: for whiles this honest fool
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
I 'll pour this pestilence into his ear,
That she repeals him for her body's lust;
And by how much she strives to do him good,
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.
So will I turn her virtue into pitch,
And out of her own goodness make the net
That shall enmesh them all.

Re-enter Roderigo

How now, Roderigo!

Rod. I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is almost spent; I have been to-night

exceedingly well cudgelled; and I think the issue will be, I shall have so much experience for my pains, and so, with no money at all and a little more wit, return again to Venice.

Iago. How poor are they that have not patience!
What wound did ever heal but by degrees?
Thou know'st we work by wit, and not by witchcraft;
And wit depends on dilatory time.
Does 't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee,
And thou by that small hurt hast cashier'd Cassio:
Though other things grow fair against the sun,
Yet fruits that blossom first will first be ripe:
Content thyself awhile. By the mass, 't is morning;
Pleasure and action make the hours seem short.
Retire thee; go where thou art billeted:
Away, I say; thou shalt know more hereafter:
Nay, get thee gone. [*Exit Roderigo.*] Two things are to be done:
My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress;
I 'll set her on;
Myself the while to draw the Moor apart,
And bring him jump when he may Cassio find
Soliciting his wife: ay, that 's the way:
Dull not device by coldness and delay. [*Exit.*

ACT III

SCENE I — *Before the castle*

Enter CASSIO *and some* Musicians

Cas. Masters, play here; I will content your pains;
Something that 's brief; and bid "Good morrow, general." [*Music.*

Enter Clown

Clo. Why, masters, have your instruments been in Naples, that they speak i' the nose thus?

First Mus. How, sir, how!

Clo. Are these, I pray you, wind-instruments?

First Mus. Ay, marry, are they, sir.

Clo. O, thereby hangs a tail.

First Mus. Whereby hangs a tale, sir? 9

Clo. Marry, sir, by many a wind-instrument that I know. But, masters, here 's money for you: and the general so likes your music, that he desires you, for love's sake, to make no more noise with it.

First Mus. Well, sir, we will not.

Clo. If you have any music that may not be heard, to 't again: but, as they say, to hear music the general does not greatly care.

First Mus. We have none such, sir. 19

Clo. Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I 'll away: go; vanish into air; away! [*Exeunt Musicians.*

Cas. Dost thou hear, my honest friend?

Clo. No, I hear not your honest friend; I hear you.

Cas. Prithee, keep up thy quillets. There's a poor piece of gold for thee: if the gentlewoman that

attends the general's wife be stirring, tell her there's one Cassio entreats her a little favour of speech: wilt thou do this?

Clo. She is stirring, sir: if she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her.

Cas. Do, good my friend. [*Exit Clown.*

Enter Iago

In happy time, Iago.

Iago. You have not been a-bed, then?

Cas. Why, no; the day had broke
Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,
To send in to your wife: my suit to her
Is, that she will to virtuous Desdemona
Procure me some access.

Iago. I 'll send her to you presently;
And I 'll devise a mean to draw the Moor
Out of the way, that your converse and business
May be more free.

Cas. I humbly thank you for 't. [*Exit Iago.*]
I never knew
A Florentine more kind and honest.

Enter Emilia

Emil. Good morrow, good lieutenant: I am sorry
For your displeasure; but all will sure be well.
The general and his wife are talking of it;
And she speaks for you stoutly: the Moor replies,
That he you hurt is of great fame in Cyprus
And great affinity, and that in wholesome wisdom
He might not but refuse you; but he protests he loves you,
And needs no other suitor but his likings

To take the safest occasion by the front
To bring you in again.

Cas. Yet, I beseech you,
If you think fit, or that it may be done,
Give me advantage of some brief discourse
With Desdemona alone.

Emil. Pray you, come in:
I will bestow you where you shall have time
To speak your bosom freely.

Cas. I am much bound to you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II — *A room in the castle*

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, *and* Gentlemen

Oth. These letters give, Iago, to the pilot;
And by him do my duties to the senate:
That done, I will be walking on the works;
Repair there to me.

Iago. Well, my good lord, I 'll do 't.

Oth. This fortification, gentlemen, shall we see 't?

Gent. We 'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III — *The garden of the castle*

Enter DESDEMONA, CASSIO, *and* EMILIA

Des. Be thou assured, good Cassio, I will do
All my abilities in thy behalf.

Emil. Good madam, do: I warrant it grieves my husband,
As if the case were his.

Des. O, that 's an honest fellow. Do not doubt, Cassio,
But I will have my lord and you again
As friendly as you were.

Cas. Bounteous madam,
Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,
He 's never any thing but your true servant.
Des. I know 't; I thank you. You do love my lord:
You have known him long; and be you well assured
He shall in strangeness stand no further off
Than in a politic distance.
Cas. Ay, but, lady,
That policy may either last so long,
Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,
Or breed itself so out of circumstance,
That, I being absent and my place supplied,
My general will forget my love and service.
Des. Do not doubt that; before Emilia here
I give thee warrant of thy place: assure thee,
If I do vow a friendship, I 'll perform it
To the last article: my lord shall never rest:
I 'll watch him tame and talk him out of patience;
His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;
I 'll intermingle every thing he does
With Cassio's suit: therefore be merry, Cassio;
For thy solicitor shall rather die
Than give thy cause away.

Enter Othello *and* Iago, *at a distance*

Emil. Madam, here comes my lord.
Cas. Madam, I 'll take my leave.
Des. Nay, stay, and hear me speak.
Cas. Madam, not now: I am very ill at ease,
Unfit for mine own purposes.
Des. Well, do your discretion. [*Exit Cassio.*

Iago. Ha! I like not that.
Oth. What dost thou say?
Iago. Nothing, my lord: or if — I know not what.
Oth. Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?
Iago. Cassio, my lord! No, sure, I cannot think it,
That he would steal away so guilty-like,
Seeing you coming.
Oth. I do believe 't was he.
Des. How now, my lord!
I have been talking with a suitor here,
A man that languishes in your displeasure.
Oth. Who is 't you mean?
Des. Why, your lieutenant, Cassio. Good my lord,
If I have any grace or power to move you,
His present reconciliation take;
For if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance and not in cunning,
I have no judgement in an honest face;
I prithee, call him back.
Oth. Went he hence now?
Des. Ay, sooth; so humbled
That he hath left part of his grief with me,
To suffer with him. Good love, call him back.
Oth. Not now, sweet Desdemona; some other time.
Des. But shall 't be shortly?
Oth. The sooner, sweet, for you.
Des. Shall 't be to-night at supper?
Oth. No, not to-night.
Des. To-morrow dinner, then?

Oth. I shall not dine at home;
I meet the captains at the citadel.
Des. Why then to-morrow night; or Tuesday morn;
On Tuesday noon, or night; on Wednesday morn:
I prithee, name the time; but let it not
Exceed three days: in faith he 's penitent;
And yet his trespass, in our common reason —
Save that, they say, the wars must make examples
Out of their best — is not almost a fault
To incur a private check. When shall he come?
Tell me, Othello: I wonder in my soul,
What you would ask me, that I should deny,
Or stand so mammering on. What! Michael Cassio,
That came a-wooing with you, and so many a time,
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,
Hath ta'en your part; to have so much to do
To bring him in! Trust me, I could do much, —
Oth. Prithee, no more: let him come when he will:
I will deny thee nothing.
Des. Why, this is not a boon;
'T is as I should entreat you wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm,
Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit
To your own person: nay, when I have a suit
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,
It shall be full of poise and difficult weight,
And fearful to be granted.
Oth. I will deny thee nothing:
Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,
To leave me but a little to myself.
Des. Shall I deny you? no: farewell, my lord.

Oth. Farewell, my Desdemona: I 'll come to thee straight.

Des. Emilia, come. Be as your fancies teach you;
Whate'er you be, I am obedient.

[*Exeunt Desdemona and Emilia.*

Oth. Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul,
But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again

Iago. My noble lord, —

Oth. What dost thou say, Iago?

Iago. Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,
Know of your love?

Oth. He did, from first to last: why dost thou ask?

Iago. But for a satisfaction of my thought;
No further harm.

Oth. Why of thy thought, Iago?

Iago. I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

Oth. O, yes; and went between us very oft.

Iago. Indeed!

Oth. Indeed! ay, indeed: discern'st thou aught in that?
Is he not honest?

Iago. Honest, my lord!

Oth. Honest! ay, honest.

Iago. My lord, for aught I know.

Oth. What dost thou think?

Iago. Think, my lord!

Oth. Think, my lord!
By heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought

Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean something:
I heard thee say even now, thou likedst not that,
When Cassio left my wife: what didst not like?
And when I told thee he was of my counsel
In my whole course of wooing, thou criedst "Indeed!"
And didst contract and purse thy brow together,
As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain
Some horrible conceit: if thou dost love me,
Show me thy thought.

Iago. My lord, you know I love you.

Oth. I think thou dost;
And, for I know thou 'rt full of love and honesty,
And weigh'st thy words before thou givest them breath,
Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more:
For such things in a false disloyal knave
Are tricks of custom, but in a man that 's just
They are close delations, working from the heart
That passion cannot rule.

Iago. For Michael Cassio,
I dare be sworn I think that he is honest.

Oth. I think so too.

Iago. Men should be what they seem;
Or those that be not, would they might seem none!

Oth. Certain, men should be what they seem.

Iago. Why, then, I think Cassio's an honest man.

Oth. Nay, yet there 's more in this:
I prithee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,
As thou dost ruminate, and give thy worst of thoughts
The worst of words.

Iago. Good my lord, pardon me:
Though I am bound to every act of duty,
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.
Utter my thoughts? Why, say they are vile and
false;
As where 's that palace whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not? who has a breast so pure,
But some uncleanly apprehensions
Keep leets and law-days and in session sit
With meditations lawful?
Oth. Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,
If thou but think'st him wrong'd and makest his ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.
Iago. I do beseech you —
Though I perchance am vicious in my guess,
As, I confess, it is my nature's plague
To spy into abuses, and oft my jealousy
Shapes faults that are not — that your wisdom yet,
From one that so imperfectly conceits,
Would take no notice, nor build yourself a trouble
Out of his scattering and unsure observance.
It were not for your quiet nor your good,
Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,
To let you know my thoughts.
Oth. What dost thou mean?
Iago. Good name in man and woman, dear my
lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
Who steals my purse steals trash; 't is something,
nothing;
'T was mine, 't is his, and has been slave to thou-
sands;

But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.
Oth. By heaven, I 'll know thy thoughts.
Iago. You cannot, if my heart were in your hand;
Nor shall not, whilst 't is in my custody.
Oth. Ha!
Iago. O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;
It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock
The meat it feeds on: that cuckold lives in bliss
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;
But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er
Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves!
Oth. O misery!
Iago. Poor and content is rich, and rich enough,
But riches fineless is as poor as winter
To him that ever fears he shall be poor.
Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
From jealousy!
Oth. Why, why is this?
Think'st thou I 'ld make a life of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh suspicions? No; to be once in doubt
Is once to be resolved: exchange me for a goat,
When I shall turn the business of my soul
To such exsufflicate and blown surmises,
Matching thy inference. 'T is not to make me jealous
To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
Is free of speech, sings, plays and dances well;
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous:
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw

The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt;
For she had eyes, and chose me. No, Iago;
I 'll see before I doubt; when I doubt, prove;
And on the proof, there is no more but this,
Away at once with love or jealousy!
Iago. I am glad of it; for now I shall have reason
To show the love and duty that I bear you
With franker spirit: therefore, as I am bound,
Receive it from me. I speak not yet of proof.
Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio;
Wear your eye thus, not jealous nor secure:
I would not have your free and noble nature,
Out of self-bounty, be abused; look to 't:
I know our country disposition well;
In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience
Is not to leave 't undone, but keep 't unknown.
Oth. Dost thou say so?
Iago. She did deceive her father, marrying you;
And when she seem'd to shake and fear your looks,
She loved them most.
Oth. And so she did.
Iago. Why, go to, then;
She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,
To seel her father's eyes up close as oak —
He thought 't was witchcraft; — but I am much to blame —
I humbly do beseech you of your pardon
For too much loving you.
Oth. I am bound to thee for ever.
Iago. I see this hath a little dash'd your spirits.

Oth. Not a jot, not a jot.
Iago. I' faith, I fear it has.
I hope you will consider what is spoke
Comes from my love. But I do see you 're moved:
I am to pray you not to strain my speech
To grosser issues nor to larger reach
Than to suspicion.
Oth. I will not.
Iago. Should you do so, my lord,
My speech should fall into such vile success
As my thoughts aim not at. Cassio 's my worthy friend —
My lord, I see you 're moved.
Oth. No, not much moved:
I do not think but Desdemona's honest.
Iago. Long live she so! and long live you to think so!
Oth. And yet, how nature erring from itself, —
Iago. Ay, there 's the point: as — to be bold with you —
Not to affect many proposed matches
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,
Whereto we see in all things nature tends —
Foh! one may smell in such a will most rank,
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.
But pardon me; I do not in position
Distinctly speak of her; though I may fear
Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
May fall to match you with her country forms
And happily repent.
Oth. Farewell, farewell:
If more thou dost perceive, let me know more;
Set on thy wife to observe: leave me, Iago.

Iago. [*Going*] My lord, I take my leave.
Oth. Why did I marry? This honest creature doubtless
Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.
Iago. [*Returning*] My lord, I would I might entreat your honour
To scan this thing no further; leave it to time:
Though it be fit that Cassio have his place
For, sure, he fills it up with great ability,
Yet, if you please to hold him off awhile,
You shall by that perceive him and his means:
Note, if your lady strain his entertainment
With any strong or vehement importunity;
Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,
Let me be thought too busy in my fears —
As worthy cause I have to fear I am —
And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.
Oth. Fear not my government.
Iago. I once more take my leave. [*Exit.*
Oth. This fellow 's of exceeding honesty,
And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,
Of human dealings. If I do prove her haggard,
Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
I 'ld whistle her off and let her down the wind,
To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black
And have not those soft parts of conversation
That chamberers have, or for I am declined
Into the vale of years, — yet that 's not much —
She 's gone. I am abused; and my relief
Must be to loathe her. O curse of marriage,
That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,

And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses. Yet, 't is the plague of great ones;
Prerogatived are they less than the base;
'T is destiny unshunnable, like death:
Even then this forked plague is fated to us
When we do quicken. Desdemona comes:

Re-enter Desdemona *and* Emilia

If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself!
I'll not believe 't.
Des. How now, my dear Othello!
Your dinner, and the generous islanders
By you invited, do attend your presence.
Oth. I am to blame.
Des. Why do you speak so faintly?
Are you not well?
Oth. I have a pain upon my forehead here.
Des. 'Faith, that 's with watching; 't will away again:
Let me but bind it hard, within this hour
It will be well.
Oth. Your napkin is too little:
[*He puts the handkerchief from him; and it drops.*
Let it alone. Come, I 'll go in with you.
Des. I am very sorry that you are not well.
[*Exeunt Othello and Desdemona.*
Emil. I am glad I have found this napkin:
This was her first remembrance from the Moor:
My wayward husband hath a hundred times
Woo'd me to steal it; but she so loves the token,
For he conjured her she should ever keep it,

That she reserves it evermore about her
To kiss and talk to. I 'll have the work ta'en out,
And give 't Iago: what he will do with it
Heaven knows, not I;
I nothing but to please his fantasy.

Re-enter Iago

Iago. How now! what do you here alone?
Emil. Do not you chide; I have a thing for you.
Iago. A thing for me? it is a common thing —
Emil. Ha!
Iago. To have a foolish wife.
Emil. O, is that all? What will you give me now
For that same handkerchief?
Iago. What handkerchief?
Emil. What handkerchief!
Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona;
That which so often you did bid me steal.
Iago. Hast stol'n it from her?
Emil. No, 'faith; she let it drop by negligence,
And, to the advantage, I, being here, took 't up.
Look, here it is.
Iago. A good wench; give it me.
Emil. What will you do with 't, that you have been so earnest
To have me filch it?
Iago. [*Snatching it*] Why, what 's that to you?
Emil. If 't be not for some purpose of import
Give 't me again: poor lady, she 'll run mad
When she shall lack it.

Iago. Be not acknown on 't; I have use for it.
Go, leave me. [*Exit Emilia.*
I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,
And let him find it. Trifles light as air
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ: this may do something.
The Moor already changes with my poison:
Dangerous conceits are in their natures poisons,
Which at the first are scarce found to distaste,
But with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur. I did say so:
Look, where he comes!

Re-enter Othello

Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou owedst yesterday.

Oth. Ha! ha! false to me?

Iago. Why, how now, general! no more of that.

Oth. Avaunt! be gone! thou hast set me on the rack:
I swear 't is better to be much abused
Than but to know 't a little.

Iago. How now, my lord!

Oth. What sense had I of her stol'n hours of lust?
I saw 't not, thought it not, it harm'd not me:
I slept the next night well, was free and merry;
I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips:
He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stol'n,
Let him not know 't, and he 's not robb'd at all.

Iago. I am sorry to hear this.

Oth. I had been happy, if the general camp,
Pioners and all, had tasted her sweet body,
So I had nothing known. O, now for ever
Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!
Farewell the plumed troop and the big wars
That make ambition virtue! O, farewell!
Farewell the neighing steed and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war!
And, O you mortal engines, whose rude throats
The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
Farewell! Othello's occupation 's gone!

Iago. Is 't possible, my lord?

Oth. Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore,
Be sure of it; give me the ocular proof;
Or, by the worth of man's eternal soul,
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog
Than answer my waked wrath!

Iago. Is 't come to this?

Oth. Make me to see 't; at the least, so prove it,
That the probation bear no hinge nor loop
To hang a doubt on; or woe upon thy life!

Iago. My noble lord, —

Oth. If thou dost slander her and torture me,
Never pray more; abandon all remorse;
On horror's head horrors accumulate;
Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amazed;
For nothing canst thou to damnation add
Greater than that.

Iago. O grace! O heaven forgive me!
Are you a man? have you a soul or sense?

God be wi' you; take mine office. O wretched fool,
That livest to make thine honesty a vice!
O monstrous world! Take note, take note, O world
To be direct and honest is not safe.
I thank you for this profit, and from hence
I 'll love no friend, sith love breeds such offence.
Oth. Nay, stay: thou shouldst be honest.
Iago. I should be wise, for honesty 's a fool
And loses that it works for.
Oth. By the world,
I think my wife be honest, and think she is not;
I think that thou art just, and think thou art not.
I 'll have some proof. Her name, that was as fresh
As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black
As mine own face. If there be cords, or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I 'll not endure it. Would I were satisfied!
Iago. I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion:
I do repent me that I put it to you.
You would be satisfied?
Oth. Would! nay, I will.
Iago. And may: but, how? how satisfied, my lord?
Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on —
Behold her topp'd?
Oth. Death and damnation! O!
Iago. It were a tedious difficulty I think,
To bring them to that prospect: damn them then,
If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster
More than their own! What then? how then?
What shall I say? Where 's satisfaction?
It is impossible you should see this,

Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,
As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross
As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,
If imputation and strong circumstances,
Which lead directly to the door of truth,
Will give you satisfaction, you may have 't.
Oth. Give me a living reason she 's disloyal.
Iago. I do not like the office:
But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far,
Prick'd to 't by foolish honesty and love,
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately;
And, being troubled with a raging tooth,
I could not sleep.
There are a kind of men so loose of soul,
That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs:
One of this kind is Cassio:
In sleep I heard him say "Sweet Desdemona,
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves";
And then, sir, would he gripe and wring my hand,
Cry "O sweet creature!" and then kiss me hard,
As if he pluck'd up kisses by the roots,
That grew upon my lips: then sigh'd, and then
Cried "Cursed fate that gave thee to the Moor!"
Oth. O monstrous! monstrous!
Iago. Nay, this was but his dream.
Oth. But this denoted a foregone conclusion:
'T is a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.
Iago. And this may help to thicken other proofs
That do demonstrate thinly.
Oth. I 'll tear her all to pieces.
Iago. Nay, but be wise: yet we see nothing done;
She may be honest yet. Tell me but this,

Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief
Spotted with strawberries in your wife's hand?
Oth. I gave her such a one; 't was my first gift.
Iago. I know not that: but such a handkerchief —
I am sure it was your wife's — did I to-day
See Cassio wipe his beard with.
Oth. If it be that, —
Iago. If it be that, or any that was hers,
It speaks against her with the other proofs.
Oth. O, that the slave had forty thousand lives!
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.
Now do I see 't is true. Look here, Iago;
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven.
'T is gone.
Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell!
Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne
To tyrannous hate! Swell, bosom, with thy fraught,
For 't is of aspics' tongues!
Iago. Yet be content.
Oth. O, blood, blood, blood!
Iago. Patience, I say; your mind perhaps may change.
Oth. Never, Iago. Like to the Pontic sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontic and the Hellespont,
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable and wide revenge
Swallow them up. Now, by yond marble heaven,
[*Kneels*] In the due reverence of a sacred vow
I here engage my words.

Iago. Do not rise yet.
[*Kneels*] Witness, you ever-burning lights above,
You elements that clip us round about,
Witness that here Iago doth give up
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,
To wrong'd Othello's service! Let him command,
And to obey shall be in me remorse,
What bloody business ever. [*They rise.*
Oth. I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
And will upon the instant put thee to 't: 471
Within these three days let me hear thee say
That Cassio 's not alive.
Iago. My friend is dead; 't is done at your request:
But let her live.
Oth. Damn her, lewd minx! O, damn her!
Come, go with me apart; I will withdraw,
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.
Iago. I am your own for ever. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *Before the castle*

Enter Desdemona, Emilia, *and* Clown

Des. Do you know, sirrah, where Lieutenant Cassio lies?
Clo. I dare not say he lies any where.
Des. Why, man?
Clo. He is a soldier, and for one to say a soldier lies, is stabbing.

Des. Go to: where lodges he?

Clo. To tell you where he lodges, is to tell you where I lie.

Des. Can any thing be made of this?

Clo. I know not where he lodges, and for me to devise a lodging and say he lies here or he lies there, were to lie in mine own throat.

Des. Can you inquire him out, and be edified by report?

Clo. I will catechize the world for him; that is, make questions, and by them answer.

Des. Seek him, bid him come hither: tell him I have moved my lord on his behalf, and hope all will be well.

Clo. To do this is within the compass of man's wit; and therefore I will attempt the doing it. [*Exit.*

Des. Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia?

Emil. I know not, madam.

Des. Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse
Full of crusadoes: and, but my noble Moor
Is true of mind and made of no such baseness
As jealous creatures are, it were enough
To put him to ill thinking.

Emil. Is he not jealous?

Des. Who, he? I think the sun where he was born
Drew all such humours from him.

Emil. Look, where he comes.

Des. I will not leave him now till Cassio
Be call'd to him.

Enter OTHELLO

How is 't with you, my lord?

Oth. Well, my good lady. [*Aside*] O, hardness to dissemble! —
How do you, Desdemona?

Des. Well, my good lord.

Oth. Give me your hand: this hand is moist, my lady.

Des. It yet hath felt no age nor known no sorrow.

Oth. This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart:
Hot, hot, and moist: this hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout;
For here 's a young and sweating devil here,
That commonly rebels. 'T is a good hand,
A frank one.

Des. You may, indeed, say so;
For 't was that hand that gave away my heart.

Oth. A liberal hand: the hearts of old gave hands;
But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.

Des. I cannot speak of this. Come now, your promise.

Oth. What promise, chuck?

Des. I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

Oth. I have a salt and sorry rheum offends me;
Lend me thy handkerchief.

Des. Here, my lord.

Oth. That which I gave you.

Des. I have it not about me.

Oth. Not?

Des. No, indeed, my lord.
Oth. That 's a fault. That handkerchief
Did an Egyptian to my mother give;
She was a charmer, and could almost read
The thoughts of people: she told her, while she kept it,
'T would make her amiable and subdue my father
Entirely to her love, but if she lost it
Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
Should hold her loathed and his spirits should hunt
After new fancies: she, dying, gave it me;
And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,
To give it her. I did so: and take heed on 't;
Make it a darling like your precious eye;
To lose 't or give 't away were such perdition
As nothing else could match.
Des. Is 't possible?
Oth. 'T is true: there 's magic in the web of it
A sibyl, that had number'd in the world
The sun to course two hundred compasses,
In her prophetic fury sew'd the work;
The worms were hallow'd that did breed the silk;
And it was dyed in mummy which the skilful
Conserved of maidens' hearts.
Des. Indeed! is 't true?
Oth. Most veritable; therefore look to 't well.
Des. Then would to God that I had never seen 't!
Oth. Ha! wherefore?
Des. Why do you speak so startingly and rash?
Oth. Is 't lost? is 't gone? speak, is it out o' the way?
Des. Heaven bless us!
Oth. Say you?

Des. It is not lost; but what an if it were?
Oth. How!
Des. I say, it is not lost.
Oth. Fetch 't, let me see 't.
Des. Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now.
This is a trick to put me from my suit:
Pray you, let Cassio be received again.
Oth. Fetch me the handkerchief: my mind misgives.
Des. Come, come;
You 'll never meet a more sufficient man.
Oth. The handkerchief!
Des. I pray, talk me of Cassio.
Oth. The handkerchief!
Des. A man that all his time
Hath founded his good fortunes on your love,
Shared dangers with you, —
Oth. The handkerchief!
Des. In sooth, you are to blame.
Oth. Away! [*Exit.*
Emil. Is not this man jealous?
Des. I ne'er saw this before.
Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief:
I am most unhappy in the loss of it.
Emil. 'T is not a year or two shows us a man:
They are all but stomachs, and we all but food;
They eat us hungerly, and when they are full,
They belch us. Look you, Cassio and my husband!

Enter CASSIO *and* IAGO

Iago. There is no other way; 't is she must do 't:
And, lo, the happiness! go, and importune her.

Des. How now, good Cassio! what 's the news with you?

Cas. Madam, my former suit: I do beseech you

That by your virtuous means I may again
Exist, and be a member of his love
Whom I with all the office of my heart
Entirely honour: I would not be delay'd.
If my offence be of such mortal kind
That nor my service past, nor present sorrows,
Nor purposed merit in futurity,
Can ransom me into his love again,
But to know so must be my benefit;
So shall I clothe me in a forced content,
And shut myself up in some other course,
To fortune's alms.

Des. Alas, thrice-gentle Cassio!
My advocation is not now in tune;
My lord is not my lord; nor should I know him
Were he in favour as in humour alter'd.
So help me every spirit sanctified,
As I have spoken for you all my best
And stood within the blank of his displeasure
For my free speech! you must awhile be patient:
What I can do I will; and more I will
Than for myself I dare: let that suffice you.

Iago. Is my lord angry?

Emil. He went hence but now,
And certainly in strange unquietness.

Iago. Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon,
When it hath blown his ranks into the air,
And, like the devil, from his very arm

Puff'd his own brother: — and can he be angry?
Something of moment then: I will go meet him:
There 's matter in 't indeed, if he be angry.
Des. I prithee, do so. [*Exit Iago.*
Something, sure, of state,
Either from Venice, or some unhatch'd practice
Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,
Hath puddled his clear spirit; and in such cases
Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
Though great ones are their object. 'T is even so;
For let our finger ache, and it indues
Our other healthful members even to that sense
Of pain: nay, we must think men are not gods,
Nor of them look for such observances
As fit the bridal. Beshrew me much, Emilia,
I was, unhandsome warrior as I am,
Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;
But now I find I had suborn'd the witness,
And he 's indicted falsely.
Emil. Pray heaven it be state-matters, as you think,
And no conception nor no jealous toy
Concerning you.
Des. Alas the day, I never gave him cause!
Emil. But jealous souls will not be answer'd so;
They are not ever jealous for the cause,
But jealous for they are jealous: 't is a monster
Begot upon itself, born on itself.
Des. Heaven keep that monster from Othello's mind!
Emil. Lady, amen.
Des. I will go seek him. Cassio, walk hereabout:

If I do find him fit, I 'll move your suit,
And seek to effect it to my uttermost.
Cas. I humbly thank your ladyship.
[*Exeunt Desdemona and Emilia.*

Enter Bianca

Bian. Save you, friend Cassio!
Cas. What make you from home?
How is it with you, my most fair Bianca?
I' faith, sweet love, I was coming to your house.
Bian. And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.
What, keep a week away? seven days and nights?
Eight score eight hours? and lovers' absent hours,
More tedious than the dial eight score times?
O weary reckoning!
Cas. Pardon me, Bianca:
I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd;
But I shall, in a more continuate time,
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,
[*Giving her Desdemona's handkerchief.*
Take me this work out.
Bian. O Cassio, whence came this?
This is some token from a newer friend:
To the felt absence now I feel a cause:
now
Is 't come to this? Well, well.
Cas. Go to, woman!
Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,
From whence you have them. You are jealous
That this is from some mistress, some remembrance:
No, in good troth, Bianca.
Bian. Why, whose is it?

Cas. I know not, sweet: I found it in my chamber.
I like the work well: ere it be demanded —
As like enough it will — I 'ld have it copied:
Take it, and do 't; and leave me for this time.
Bian. Leave you! wherefore?
Cas. I do attend here on the general;
And think it no addition, nor my wish,
To have him see me woman'd.
Bian. Why, I pray you?
Cas. Not that I love you not.
Bian. But that you do not love me.
I pray you, bring me on the way a little,
And say if I shall see you soon at night.
Cas. 'Tis but a little way that I can bring you;
For I attend here: but I 'll see you soon.
Bian. 'T is very good; I must be circumstanced.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

Scene I — *Cyprus. Before the castle*

Enter Othello *and* Iago

Iago. Will you think so?
Oth. Think so, Iago!
Iago. What,
To kiss in private?
Oth. An unauthorized kiss,
Iago. Or to be naked with her friend in bed
An hour or more, not meaning any harm?
Oth. Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm!

It is hypocrisy against the devil:
They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,
The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven.

Iago. So they do nothing, 't is a venial slip;
But if I give my wife a handkerchief, —

Oth. What then?

Iago. Why, then, 't is hers, my lord; and, being hers,
She may, I think, bestow 't on any man.

Oth. She is protectress of her honour too:
May she give that?

Iago. Her honour is an essence that 's not seen;
They have it very oft that have it not:
But, for the handkerchief, —

Oth. By heaven, I would most gladly have forgot it.
Thou said'st — O, it comes o'er my memory
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all — he had my handkerchief.

Iago. Ay, what of that?

Oth. That 's not so good now.

Iago. What,
If I had said I had seen him do you wrong?
Or heard him say, — as knaves be such abroad,
Who having, by their own importunate suit,
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
Convinced or supplied them, cannot choose
But they must blab—

Oth. Hath he said any thing?

Iago. He hath, my lord; but be you well assured,
No more than he 'll unswear.

Oth. What hath he said?
Iago. 'Faith, that he did — I know not what he did.
Oth. What? what?
Iago. Lie —
Oth. With her?
Iago. With her, on her; what you will.
Oth. Lie with her! lie on her! We say lie on her, when they belie her. Lie with her! that 's fulsome. — Handkerchief — confessions — handkerchief! — To confess, and be hanged for his labour; — first to be hanged, and then to confess. — I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction. It is not words that shake me thus. Pish! Noses, ears, and lips. — Is 't possible? — Confess — handkerchief! — O devil!
[*Falls in a trance.*

Iago. Work on,
My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are caught;
And many worthy and chaste dames even thus,
All guiltless, meet reproach. What, ho! my lord!
My lord, I say! Othello!

Enter Cassio

How now, Cassio!
Cas. What 's the matter? 50
Iago. My lord is fall'n into an epilepsy:
This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.
Cas. Rub him about the temples.
Iago. No, forbear;
The lethargy must have his quiet course:

If not, he foams at mouth and by and by
Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs:
Do you withdraw yourself a little while,
He will recover straight: when he is gone,
I would on great occasion speak with you.
[*Exit Cassio.*
How is it, general? have you not hurt your head?
Oth. Dost thou mock me?
Iago. I mock you! no, by heaven.
Would you would bear your fortune like a man!
Oth. A horned man 's a monster and a beast.
Iago. There 's many a beast then in a populous city,
And many a civil monster.
Oth. Did he confess it?
Iago. Good sir, be a man;
Think every bearded fellow that 's but yoked
May draw with you: there's millions now alive
That nightly lie in those unproper beds
Which they dare swear peculiar: your case is better.
O, 't is the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,
To lip a wanton in a secure couch,
And to suppose her chaste! No, let me know;
And knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.
Oth. O, thou art wise; 't is certain.
Iago. Stand you awhile apart;
Confine yourself but in a patient list.
Whilst you were here o'erwhelmed with your grief —
A passion most unsuiting such a man —
Cassio came hither: I shifted him away,
And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy,
Bade him anon return and here speak with me;

The which he promised. Do but encave yourself,
And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorns,
That dwell in every region of his face;
For I will make him tell the tale anew,
Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when
He hath, and is again to cope your wife:
I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience;
Or I shall say you are all in all in spleen,
And nothing of a man.

Oth. Dost thou hear, Iago? 90
I will be found most cunning in my patience;
But — dost thou hear? — most bloody.

Iago. That 's not amiss;
But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw?
[*Othello retires.*

Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,
A housewife that by selling her desires
Buys herself bread and clothes: it is a creature
That dotes on Cassio; as 't is the strumpet's plague
To beguile many and be beguiled by one:
He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain
From the excess of laughter. Here he comes: 100

Re-enter Cassio

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad;
And his unbookish jealousy must construe
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures and light behaviour,
Quite in the wrong. How do you now, lieutenant?

Cas. The worser that you give me the addition
Whose want even kills me.

Iago. Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure
on 't.

[*Speaking lower*] Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power,
How quickly should you speed!

Cas. Alas, poor caitiff!

Oth. Look, how he laughs already!

Iago. I never knew woman love man so.

Cas. Alas, poor rogue! I think, i' faith, she loves me.

Oth. Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.

Iago. Do you hear, Cassio?

Oth. Now he importunes him
To tell it o'er: go to; well said, well said.

Iago. She gives it out that you shall marry her:
Do you intend it?

Cas. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. Do you triumph, Roman? do you triumph?

Cas. I marry her! what? a customer! Prithee, bear some charity to my wit; do not think it so unwholesome. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. So, so, so, so: they laugh that win.

Iago. 'Faith, the cry goes that you shall marry her.

Cas. Prithee, say true.

Iago. I am a very villain else.

Oth. Have you scored me? Well.

Cas. This is the monkey's own giving out: she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

Oth. Iago beckons me; now he begins the story.

Cas. She was here even now; she haunts me in every place. I was the other day talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians; and thither comes

the bauble, and, by this hand, she falls me thus about my neck —

Oth. Crying "O dear Cassio!" as it were: his gesture imports it.

Cas. So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me; so hales, and pulls me: ha, ha, ha!

Oth. Now he tells how she plucked him to my chamber. O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.

Cas. Well, I must leave her company.

Iago. Before me! look, where she comes.

Cas. 'T is such another fitchew! marry, a perfumed one.

Enter Bianca

What do you mean by this haunting of me?

Bian. Let the devil and his dam haunt you! What did you mean by that same handkerchief you gave me even now? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the work? — A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work? There; give it your hobby-horse: wheresoever you had it, I 'll take out no work on 't.

Cas. How now, my sweet Bianca! how now! how now!

Oth. By heaven, that should be my handkerchief!

Bian. An you 'll come to supper to-night, you may; an you will not, come when you are next prepared for. [*Exit.*

Iago. After her, after her.

Cas. 'Faith, I must; she 'll rail in the street else.

Iago. Will you sup there?

Cas. 'Faith, I intend so.

Iago. Well, I may chance to see you: for I would very fain speak with you.

Cas. Prithee, come; will you?

Iago. Go to; say no more. [*Exit Cassio.*

Oth. [*Advancing*] How shall I murder him, Iago? 180

Iago. Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice?

Oth. O Iago!

Iago. And did you see the handkerchief?

Oth. Was that mine?

Iago. Yours, by this hand: and to see how he prizes the foolish woman your wife! she gave it him, and he hath given it his whore.

Oth. I would have him nine years a-killing. A fine woman! a fair woman! a sweet woman!

Iago. Nay, you must forget that. 190

Oth. Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damned to-night; for she shall not live: no, my heart is turned to stone; I strike it, and it hurts my hand. O, the world hath not a sweeter creature: she might lie by an emperor's side and command him tasks.

Iago. Nay, that 's not your way.

Oth. Hang her! I do but say what she is: so delicate with her needle: an admirable musician: O! she will sing the savageness out of a bear: of so high and plenteous wit and invention:— 201

Iago. She 's the worse for all this.

Oth. O, a thousand thousand times: and then, of so gentle a condition!

Iago. Ay, too gentle.

Oth. Nay, that 's certain: but yet the pity of it, Iago! O Iago, the pity of it, Iago!

Iago. If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend; for, if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.

Oth. I will chop her into messes: cuckold me!

Iago. O, 't is foul in her.

Oth. With mine officer!

Iago. That 's fouler.

Oth. Get me some poison, Iago; this night: I 'll not expostulate with her, lest her body and beauty unprovide my mind again: this night, Iago.

Iago. Do it not with poison, strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated.

Oth. Good, good: the justice of it pleases: very good.

Iago. And for Cassio, let me be his undertaker: you shall hear more by midnight.

Oth. Excellent good. [*A trumpet within.*] What trumpet is that same?

Iago. Something from Venice, sure. 'T is Lodovico
Come from the duke: and, see, your wife is with him.

Enter Lodovico, Desdemona, *and* Attendants

Lod. Save you, worthy general!

Oth. With all my heart, sir.

Lod. The duke and senators of Venice greet you.
[*Gives him a letter.*

Oth. I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.
[*Opens the letter, and reads.*

Des. And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico?

Iago. I am very glad to see you, signior;
Welcome to Cyprus.

Lod. I thank you. How does Lieutenant Cassio?

Iago. Lives, sir.

Des. Cousin, there 's fall'n between him and my lord
An unkind breach: but you shall make all well.

Oth. Are you sure of that?

Des. My lord?

Oth. [*Reads*] "This fail you not to do, as you will —"

Lod. He did not call; he 's busy in the paper. 241
Is there division 'twixt my lord and Cassio?

Des. A most unhappy one: I would do much
To atone them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

Oth. Fire and brimstone!

Des. My lord?

Oth. Are you wise?

Des. What, is he angry?

Lod. May be the letter moved him;
For, as I think, they do command him home,
Deputing Cassio in his government.

Des. Trust me, I am glad on 't.

Oth. Indeed!

Des. My lord?

Oth. I am glad to see you mad.

Des. Why, sweet Othello, —

Oth. [*Striking her*] Devil! 251

Des. I have not deserved this.

Lod. My lord, this would not be believed in Venice,

Though I should swear I saw 't: 't is very much:
Make her amends; she weeps.
Oth. O devil, devil!
If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.
Out of my sight!
Des. I will not stay to offend you. [*Going.*
Lod. Truly, an obedient lady:
I do beseech your lordship, call her back.
Oth. Mistress!
Des. My lord?
Oth. What would you with her, sir?
Lod. Who, I, my lord?
Oth. Ay; you did wish that I would make her turn:
Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,
And turn again; and she can weep, sir, weep;
And she 's obedient, as you say, obedient,
Very obedient. Proceed you in your tears,
Concerning this, sir, — O well-painted passion! —
I am commanded home. Get away you;
I 'll send for you anon. Sir, I obey the mandate,
And will return to Venice. Hence, avaunt!
[*Exit Desdemona.*
Cassio shall have my place. And, sir, to-night,
I do entreat that we may sup together:
You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus. — Goats and monkeys! [*Exit.*
Lod. Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate
Call all in all sufficient? Is this the nature
Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue
The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,

Could neither graze nor pierce?

Iago. He is much changed.

Lod. Are his wits safe? is he not light of brain?

Iago. He 's that he is: I may not breathe my censure
What he might be: if what he might he is not,
I would to heaven he were!

Lod. What, strike his wife!

Iago. 'Faith, that was not so well; yet would I knew
That stroke would prove the worst!

Lod. Is it his use?
Or did the letters work upon his blood,
And new-create his fault?

Iago. Alas, alas!
It is not honesty in me to speak
What I have seen and known. You shall observe him,
And his own courses will denote him so
That I may save my speech: do but go after,
And mark how he continues.

Lod. I am sorry that I am deceived in him.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *A room in the castle*

Enter Othello *and* Emilia

Oth. You have seen nothing then?

Emil. Nor ever heard, nor ever did suspect.

Oth. Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.

Emil. But then I saw no harm, and then I heard
Each syllable that breath made up between them.

Oth. What, did they never whisper?

Emil. Never, my lord.
Oth. Nor send you out o' the way?
Emil. Never.
Oth. To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor nothing?
Emil. Never, my lord.
Oth. That 's strange.
Emil. I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
Lay down my soul at stake: if you think other,
Remove your thought; it doth abuse your bosom.
If any wretch have put this in your head,
Let heaven requite it with the serpent's curse!
For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true,
There 's no man happy; the purest of their wives
Is foul as slander.
Oth. Bid her come hither: go.
[*Exit Emilia.*
She says enough; yet she 's a simple bawd
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,
A closet lock and key of villanous secrets:
And yet she 'll kneel and pray; I have seen her do 't.

Enter Desdemona *with* Emilia

Des. My lord, what is your will?
Oth. Pray, chuck, come hither.
Des. What is your pleasure?
Oth. Let me see your eyes;
Look in my face.
Des. What horrible fancy 's this?
Oth. [*To Emilia*] Some of your function, mistress;
Leave procreants alone and shut the door;
Cough, or cry "hem," if any body come:

Your mystery, your mystery: nay, dispatch.
[*Exit Emilia.*

Des. Upon my knees, what doth your speech import?
I understand a fury in your words,
But not the words.

Oth. Why, what art thou?

Des. Your wife, my lord; your true
And loyal wife.

Oth. Come, swear it, damn thyself;
Lest, being like one of heaven, the devils themselves
Should fear to seize thee: therefore be double damn'd;
Swear thou art honest.

Des. Heaven doth truly know it.

Oth. Heaven truly knows that thou art false as hell.

Des. To whom, my lord? with whom? how am I false?

Oth. O Desdemona! Away! away! away!

Des. Alas the heavy day! Why do you weep?
Am I the motive of these tears, my lord?
If haply you my father do suspect
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not your blame on me: if you have lost him,
Why, I have lost him too.

Oth. Had it pleased heaven
To try me with affliction; had they rain'd
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head,
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips,
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes,
I should have found in some place of my soul
A drop of patience: but, alas, to make me

A fixed figure for the time of scorn
To point his slow unmoving finger at!
Yet could I bear that too; well, very well:
But there, where I have garner'd up my heart,
Where either I must live, or bear no life;
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or else dries up; to be discarded thence!
Or keep it as a cistern for foul toads
To knot and gender in! Turn thy complexion there,
Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin, —
Ay, there, look grim as hell!

Des. I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.

Oth. O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,
Who art so lovely fair and smell'st so sweet
That the sense aches at thee, would thou hadst ne'er
been born!

Des. Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed?

Oth. Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write "whore" upon? What committed!
Committed! O thou public commoner!
I should make very forges of my cheeks,
That would to cinders burn up modesty,
Did I but speak thy deeds. What committed!
Heaven stops the nose at it and the moon winks,
The bawdy wind that kisses all it meets
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
And will not hear it. What committed!
Impudent strumpet!

Des. By heaven, you do me wrong.

Oth. Are you not a strumpet?

Des. No, as I am a Christian:

If to preserve this vessel for my lord
From any other foul unlawful touch
Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.
Oth. What, not a whore?
Des. No, as I shall be saved.
Oth. Is 't possible?
Des. O, heaven forgive us!
Oth. I cry you mercy, then:
I took you for that cunning whore of Venice
That married with Othello. [*Raising his voice.*
You, mistress,
That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,
And keep the gate of hell!

Re-enter Emilia

You, you, ay, you!
We have done our course; there 's money for your pains:
I pray you, turn the key and keep our counsel.
[*Exit.*
Emil. Alas, what does this gentleman conceive?
How do you, madam? how do you, my good lady?
Des. 'Faith, half asleep.
Emil. Good madam, what 's the matter with my lord?
Des. With who?
Emil. Why, with my lord, madam.
Des. Who is thy lord?
Emil. He that is yours, sweet lady.
Des. I have none: do not talk to me, Emilia;
I cannot weep; nor answer have I none,

But what should go by water. Prithee, to-night
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets: remember;
And call thy husband hither.

Emil. Here 's a change indeed! [*Exit.*

Des. 'T is meet I should be used so, very meet.
How have I been behaved, that he might stick
The small'st opinion on my least misuse?

Re-enter Emilia *with* Iago

Iago. What is your pleasure, madam? How is 't with you!

Des. I cannot tell. Those that do teach young babes
Do it with gentle means and easy tasks:
He might have chid me so; for, in good faith,
I am a child to chiding.

Iago. What 's the matter, lady?

Emil. Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhored her,
Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
As true hearts cannot bear.

Des. Am I that name, Iago?

Iago. What name, fair lady?

Des. Such as she says my lord did say I was.

Emil. He call'd her whore: a beggar in his drink
Could not have laid such terms upon his callet.

Iago. Why did he so?

Des. I do not know; I am sure I am none such.

Iago. Do not weep, do not weep. Alas the day!

Emil. Hath she forsook so many noble matches,
Her father and her country and her friends,
To be call'd whore? would it not make one weep?

Des. It is my wretched fortune.

Iago. Beshrew him for 't!
How comes this trick upon him?
Des. Nay, heaven doth know.
Emil. I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some cogging, cozening slave, to get some office,
Have not devised this slander; I 'll be hang'd else.
Iago. Fie, there is no such man; it is impossible.
Des. If any such there be, heaven pardon him!
Emil. A halter pardon him! and hell gnaw his bones!
Why should he call her whore? who keeps her company?
What place? what time? what form? what likelihood?
The Moor abused by some most villanous knave,
Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.
O heaven, that such companions thou 'ldst unfold,
And put in every honest hand a whip
To lash the rascals naked through the world
Even from the east to the west!
Iago. Speak within door.
Emil. O, fie upon them! Some such squire he was
That turn'd your wit the seamy side without,
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.
Iago. You are a fool; go to.
Des. O good Iago,
What shall I do to win my lord again?
Good friend, go to him; for, by this light of heaven,
I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel:
If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
Either in discourse of thought or actual deed,

Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,
Delighted them in any other form;
Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
And ever will — though he do shake me off
To beggarly divorcement — love him dearly,
Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much;
And his unkindness may defeat my life,
But never taint my love. I cannot say "whore":
It doth abhor me now I speak the word;
To do the act that might the addition earn
Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.

Iago. I pray you, be content; 't is but his humour:
The business of the state does him offence,
And he does chide with you.

Des. If 't were not other, —

Iago. 'T is but so, I warrant.
[*Trumpets within.*
Hark, how those instruments summon to supper!
The messengers of Venice stay the meat:
Go in, and weep not; all things shall be well.
[*Exeunt Desdemona and Emilia.*

Enter Roderigo

How now, Roderigo!

Rod. I do not find that thou dealest justly with me.

Iago. What in the contrary?

Rod. Every day thou daffest me with some device, Iago; and rather, as it seems to me now, keepest from me all conveniency than suppliest me with the least advantage of hope. I will indeed no longer

endure it, nor am I yet persuaded to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered. 182

Iago. Will you hear me, Roderigo?

Rod. 'Faith, I have heard too much, for your words and performances are no kin together.

Iago. You charge me most unjustly.

Rod. With nought but truth. I have wasted myself out of my means. The jewels you have had from me to deliver to Desdemona would half have corrupted a votarist: you have told me she hath received them and returned me expectations and comforts of sudden respect and acquaintance, but I find none. 193

Iago. Well; go to; very well.

Rod. Very well! go to! I cannot go to, man; nor 't is not very well: nay, I think it is scurvy, and begin to find myself fopped in it.

Iago. Very well.

Rod. I tell you 't is not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona: if she will return me my jewels, I will give over my suit and repent my unlawful solicitation; if not, assure yourself I will seek satisfaction of you. 203

Iago. You have said now.

Rod. Ay, and said nothing but what I protest intendment of doing.

Iago. Why, now I see there 's mettle in thee, and even from this instant do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo: thou hast taken against me a most just exception; but yet, I protest, I have dealt most directly in thy affair.

Rod. It hath not appeared.

Iago. I grant indeed it hath not appeared, and your suspicion is not without wit and judgement. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that in thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever, I mean purpose, courage and valour, this night show it: if thou the next night following enjoy not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery and devise engines for my life.

Rod. Well, what is it? is it within reason and compass?

Iago. Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

Rod. Is that true? why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

Iago. O, no; he goes into Mauritania and takes away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here by some accident: wherein none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio.

Rod. How do you mean, removing of him?

Iago. Why, by making him uncapable of Othello's place; knocking out his brains.

Rod. And that you would have me do?

Iago. Ay, if you dare do yourself a profit and a right. He sups to-night with a harlotry, and thither will I go to him: he knows not yet of his honourable fortune. If you will watch his going thence, which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one, you may take him at your pleasure: I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amazed at it, but go along with me; I will show you such a necessity in his death that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him.

It is now high supper-time, and the night grows to waste: about it.

Rod. I will hear further reason for this.

Iago. And you shall be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III — *Another room in the castle*

Enter Othello, Lodovico, Desdemona, Emilia, *and* Attendants

Lod. I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.

Oth. O, pardon me; 't will do me good to walk.

Lod. Madam, good night; I humbly thank your ladyship.

Des. Your honour is most welcome.

Oth. Will you walk, sir? O, — Desdemona, —

Des. My lord?

Oth. Get you to bed on the instant; I will be returned forthwith: dismiss your attendant there: look it be done.

Des. I will, my lord.

[*Exeunt Othello, Lodovico, and Attendants.*

Emil. How goes it now? he looks gentler than he did.

Des. He says he will return incontinent:
He hath commanded me to go to bed,
And bade me to dismiss you.

Emil. Dismiss me!

Des. It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia,
Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu:
We must not now displease him.

Emil. I would you had never seen him!

Des. So would not I: my love doth so approve him,

That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns, —
Prithee, unpin me, — have grace and favour in them.

Emil. I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.

Des. All 's one. Good faith, how foolish are our minds!
If I do die before thee, prithee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.

Emil. Come, come, you talk.

Des. My mother had a maid call'd Barbara:
She was in love, and he she loved proved mad
And did forsake her: she had a song of "willow";
An old thing 't was, but it express'd her fortune,
And she died singing it: that song to-night
Will not go from my mind; I have much to do
But to go hang my head all at one side,
And sing it like poor Barbara. Prithee, dispatch.

Emil. Shall I go fetch your night-gown?

Des. No, unpin me here.
This Lodovico is a proper man.

Emil. A very handsome man.

Des. He speaks well.

Emil. I know a lady in Venice would have walked barefoot to Palestine for a touch of his nether lip.

Des. [*Singing*] The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow;
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow:

The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her moans;
Sing willow, willow, willow;
Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the stones; —
Lay by these: —
[*Singing*] Sing willow, willow, willow;
Prithee, hie thee; he 'll come anon: —
[*Singing*] Sing all a green willow must be my garland.
Let nobody blame him; his scorn I approve, —
Nay, that 's not next — Hark! who is 't that knocks?
Emil. It 's the wind.
Des. [*Singing*] I call'd my love false love; but what said he then?
Sing willow, willow, willow:
If I court moe women, you 'll couch with moe men. —
So, get thee gone; good night. Mine eyes do itch;
Doth that bode weeping?
Emil. 'T is neither here nor there.
Des. I have heard it said so. O, these men, these men!
Dost thou in conscience think, — tell me, Emilia, —
That there be women do abuse their husbands
In such gross kind?
Emil. There be some such, no question.
Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?
Emil. Why, would not you?
Des. No, by this heavenly light!
Emil. Nor I neither by this heavenly light;
I might do 't as well i' the dark.

Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?

Emil. The world 's a huge thing: it is a great price.
For a small vice.

Des. In truth, I think thou wouldst not.

Emil. In troth, I think I should; and undo 't when I had done. Marry, I would not do such a thing for a joint-ring, nor for measures of lawn, nor for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty exhibition; but, for the whole world, — why, who would not make her husband a cuckold to make him a monarch? I should venture purgatory for 't.

Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong
For the whole world.

Emil. Why, the wrong is but a wrong i' the world; and having the world for your labour, 't is a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.

Des. I do not think there is any such woman.

Emil. Yes, a dozen; and as many to the vantage as would store the world they played for.
But I do think it is their husbands' faults
If wives do fall: say that they slack their duties,
And pour our treasures into foreign laps,
Or else break out in peevish jealousies,
Throwing restraint upon us; or say they strike us,
Or scant our former having in despite;
Why, we have galls, and though we have some grace,
Yet have we some revenge. Let husbands know
Their wives have sense like them: they see and smell
And have their palates both for sweet and sour,

As husbands have. What is it that they do
When they change us for others? Is it sport?
I think it is: and doth affection breed it?
I think it doth: is 't frailty that thus errs?
It is so too: and have not we affections,
Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have?
Then let them use us well: else let them know,
The ills we do, their ills instruct us so.

Des. Good night, good night: heaven me such uses send,
Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad mend!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V

Scene I — *Cyprus. A street*

Enter Iago *and* Roderigo

Iago. Here, stand behind this bulk; straight will he come:
Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home:
Quick, quick; fear nothing; I 'll be at thy elbow:
It makes us, or it mars us; think on that,
And fix most firm thy resolution.

Rod. Be near at hand; I may miscarry in 't.

Iago. Here, at thy hand: be bold, and take thy stand. [*Retires.*

Rod. I have no great devotion to the deed;
And yet he hath given me satisfying reasons:
'T is but a man gone. Forth, my sword: he dies.

Iago. I have rubb'd this young quat almost to the sense,

And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain: live Roderigo,
He calls me to a restitution large
Of gold and jewels that I bobb'd from him,
As gifts to Desdemona;
It must not be: if Cassio do remain,
He hath a daily beauty in his life
That makes me ugly; and, besides, the Moor
May unfold me to him; there stand I in much peril:
No, he must die. But so: I hear him coming.

Enter Cassio

Rod. I know his gait, 't is he. — Villain, thou diest!

[*Makes a pass at Cassio.*

Cas. That thrust had been mine enemy indeed,
But that my coat is better than thou know'st:
I will make proof of thine.

[*Draws, and wounds Roderigo.*

Rod. O, I am slain!

[*Iago from behind wounds Cassio in the leg, and exit.*

Cas. I am maim'd for ever. Help, ho! murder! murder! [*Falls.*

Enter Othello

Oth. The voice of Cassio: Iago keeps his word.
Rod. O, villain that I am!
Oth. It is even so.
Cas. O, help, ho! light! a surgeon!
Oth. 'T is he: — O brave Iago, honest and just,

That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong!
Thou teachest me. Minion, your dear lies dead,
And your unblest fate hies: strumpet, I come.
Forth of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are blotted;
Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be spotted. [*Exit.*

Enter Lodovico *and* Gratiano

Cas. What ho! no watch? no passage? murder! murder!
Gra. 'T is some mischance; the cry is very direful.
Cas. O, help!
Lod. Hark!
Rod. O wretched villain!
Lod. Two or three groan: it is a heavy night:
These may be counterfeits: let 's think 't unsafe
To come in to the cry without more help.
Rod. Nobody come? then shall I bleed to death.
Lod. Hark!

Re-enter Iago, *with a light*

Gra. Here 's one comes in his shirt, with light and weapons.
Iago. Who 's there? whose noise is this that cries on murder?
Lod. We do not know.
Iago. Did not you hear a cry?
Cas. Here, here! for heaven's sake, help me!
Iago. What 's the matter?
Gra. This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.
Lod. The same indeed; a very valiant fellow.
Iago. What are you here that cry so grievously?

Cas. Iago? O, I am spoil'd, undone by villains!
Give me some help.

Iago. O me, lieutenant! what villains have done this?

Cas. I think that one of them is hereabout,
And cannot make away.

Iago. O treacherous villains!
What are you there? come in, and give some help.
[*To Lodovico and Gratiano.*

Rod. O, help me here!

Cas. That 's one of them.

Iago. O murderous slave! O villain!
[*Stabs Roderigo.*

Rod. O damn'd Iago! O inhuman dog!

Iago. Kill men i' the dark! — Where be these bloody thieves? —
How silent is this town! — Ho! murder! murder! —
What may you be? are you of good or evil?

Lod. As you shall prove us, praise us.

Iago. Signior Lodovico?

Lod. He, sir.

Iago. I cry you mercy. Here 's Cassio hurt by villains.

Gra. Cassio!

Iago. How is 't, brother!

Cas. My leg is cut in two.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid!
Light, gentlemen: I'll bind it with my shirt.

Enter Bianca

Bian. What is the matter, ho? who is 't that cried?

Iago. Who is 't that cried!
Bian. O my dear Cassio! my sweet Cassio!
O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!
Iago. O notable strumpet! Cassio, may you suspect
Who they should be that have thus mangled you?
Cas. No.
Gra. I am sorry to find you thus: I have been to seek you.
Iago. Lend me a garter. So. O, for a chair,
To bear him easily hence!
Bian. Alas, he faints! O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!
Iago. Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash
To be a party in this injury.
Patience awhile, good Cassio. Come, come;
Lend me a light. Know we this face or no?
Alas, my friend and my dear countryman
Roderigo! no: — yes, sure: — O heaven! Roderigo.
Gra. What, of Venice?
Iago. Even he, sir: did you know him?
Gra. Know him! ay.
Iago. Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle pardon;
These bloody accidents must excuse my manners,
That so neglected you.
Gra. I am glad to see you.
Iago. How do you, Cassio? O, a chair, a chair!
Gra. Roderigo!
Iago. He, he, 't is he. [*A chair brought in.*] O, that 's well said; the chair.
Some good man bear him carefully from hence;
I 'll fetch the general's surgeon. [*To Bianca*] For you, mistress,

Save you your labour. He that lies slain here, Cassio,
Was my dear friend: what malice was between you?
Cas. None in the world; nor do I know the man.
Iago. [*To Bian.*] What, look you pale? O, bear him out o' the air.
[*Cassio and Roderigo are borne off.*
Stay you, good gentlemen. Look you pale, mistress?
Do you perceive the gastness of her eye?
Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon.
Behold her well; I pray you, look upon her:
Do you see, gentlemen? nay, guiltiness will speak,
Though tongues were out of use.

Enter Emilia

Emil. 'Las, what 's the matter? what 's the matter, husband?
Iago. Cassio hath here been set on in the dark
By Roderigo and fellows that are scaped:
He 's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.
Emil. Alas, good gentleman! alas, good Cassio!
Iago. This is the fruit of whoring. Prithee, Emilia,
Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night.
[*To Bianca*] What, do you shake at that?
Bian. He supp'd at my house; but I therefore shake not.
Iago. O, did he so? I charge you, go with me.
Emil. Fie, fie upon thee, strumpet!
Bian. I am no strumpet; but of life as honest
As you that thus abuse me.
Emil. As I! foh! fie upon thee!

Iago. Kind gentlemen, let 's go see poor Cassio dress'd.
Come, mistress, you must tell 's another tale.
Emilia, run you to the citadel,
And tell my lord and lady what hath happ'd.
Will you go on? I pray. [*Aside*] This is the night
That either makes me or fordoes me quite. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *A bedchamber in the castle:* Desdemona *in bed asleep; a light burning*

Enter Othello

Oth. It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul, —
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars! —
It is the cause. Yet I 'll not shed her blood,
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,
And smooth as monumental alabaster.
Yet she must die, else she 'll betray more men.
Put out the light, and then put out the light:
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me: but once put out thy light,
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
I know not where is that Promethean heat
That can thy light relume. When I have pluck'd the rose,
I cannot give it vital growth again,
It must needs wither: I 'll smell it on the tree.
[*Kissing her.*
Ah, balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
Justice to break her sword! One more, one more,
Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,

And love thee after. One more, and this the last:
So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
But they are cruel tears: this sorrow's heavenly;
It strikes where it doth love. She wakes.

Des. Who 's there? Othello?

Oth. Ay, Desdemona.

Des. Will you come to bed, my lord?

Oth. Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona?

Des. Ay, my lord.

Oth. If you bethink yourself of any crime
Unreconciled as yet to heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.

Des. Alas, my lord, what do you mean by that?

Oth. Well, do it, and be brief; I will walk by:
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit;
No; heaven forfend! I would not kill thy soul.

Des. Talk you of killing?

Oth. Ay, I do.

Des. Then heaven
Have mercy on me!

Oth. Amen, with all my heart!

Des. If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.

Oth. Hum!

Des. And yet I fear you; for you are fatal then
When your eyes roll so: why I should fear I know not,
Since guiltiness I know not; but yet I feel I fear.

Oth. Think on thy sins.

Des. They are loves I bear to you.

Oth. Ay, and for that thou diest.

Des. That death 's unnatural that kills for loving.
Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip?

Some bloody passion shakes your very frame:
These are portents; but yet I hope, I hope,
They do not point on me.
Oth. Peace, and be still!
Des. I will so. What 's the matter?
Oth. That handkerchief which I so love and gave thee
Thou gavest to Cassio.
Des. No, by my life and soul!
Send for the man, and ask him.
Oth. Sweet soul, take heed,
Take heed of perjury; thou art on thy death-bed.
Des. Ay, but not yet to die.
Oth. Yes, presently:
Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;
For to deny each article with oath
Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.
Des. Then Lord have mercy on me!
Oth. I say, amen.
Des. And have you mercy too! I never did
Offend you in my life; never loved Cassio
But with such general warranty of heaven
As I might love; I never gave him token.
Oth. By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in 's hand.
O perjured woman! thou dost stone my heart,
And makest me call what I intend to do
A murder, which I thought a sacrifice:
I saw the handkerchief.
Des. He found it then;
I never gave it him: send for him hither;
Let him confess a truth.

Oth. He hath confess'd.
Des. What, my lord?
Oth. That he hath used thee.
Des. How? unlawfully?
Oth. Ay.
Des. He will not say so.
Oth. No, his mouth is stopp'd;
Honest Iago hath ta'en order for 't.
Des. O! my fear interprets: what, is he dead?
Oth. Had all his hairs been lives, my great revenge
Had stomach for them all.
Des. Alas! he is betray'd and I undone.
Oth. Out, strumpet! weep'st thou for him to my face?
Des. O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not!
Oth. Down, strumpet!
Des. Kill me to-morrow: let me live to-night!
Oth. Nay, if you strive, —
Des. But half an hour!
Oth. Being done, there is no pause.
Des. But while I say one prayer!
Oth. It is too late.
[*He stifles her.*
Emil. [*Within*] My lord, my lord! what, ho! my lord, my lord!
Oth. What noise is this? Not dead? not yet quite dead?
I that am cruel am yet merciful;
I would not have thee linger in thy pain:
So, so.
Emil. [*Within*] What, ho! my lord, my lord!

Oth. Who 's there?
Emil. [*Within*] O, good my lord, I would speak
a word with you!
Oth. Yes: 't is Emilia. By and by. She 's dead.
'T is like she comes to speak of Cassio's death. —
The noise was here. Ha! no more moving?
Still as the grave. Shall she come in? were 't good? —
I think she stirs again: — no. What 's best to do?
If she come in, she 'll sure speak to my wife:
My wife! my wife! what wife? I have no wife.
O, insupportable! O heavy hour!
Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse
Of sun and moon, and that the affrighted globe
Should yawn at alteration.
Emil. [*Within*] I do beseech you
That I may speak with you, O, good my lord!
Oth. I had forgot thee: O, come in, Emilia:
Soft; by and by. Let me the curtains draw.
Where art thou? [*Unlocks the door.*

Enter Emilia

What 's the matter with thee now?
Emil. O, my good lord, yonder 's foul murders
done!
Oth. What, now?
Emil. But now, my lord.
Oth. It is the very error of the moon;
She comes more nearer earth than she was wont,
And makes men mad.
Emil. Cassio, my lord, hath kill'd a young Vene-
tian
Call'd Roderigo.

Oth. Roderigo kill'd!
And Cassio kill'd!
Emil. No, Cassio is not kill'd.
Oth. Not Cassio kill'd! then murder 's out of tune,
And sweet revenge grows harsh.
Des. O, falsely, falsely murder'd!
Emil. Alas, what cry is that?
Oth. That! what?
Emil. Out, and alas! that was my lady's voice.
Help! help, ho! help! O lady, speak again!
Sweet Desdemona! O sweet mistress, speak!
Des. A guiltless death I die.
Emil. O, who hath done this deed?
Des. Nobody; I myself. Farewell:
Commend me to my kind lord: O farewell! [*Dies.*
Oth. Why, how should she be murder'd?
Emil. Alas, who knows?
Oth. You heard her say herself, it was not I.
Emil. She said so: I must needs report the truth.
Oth. She 's like a liar gone to burning hell:
'T was I that kill'd her.
Emil. O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil!
Oth. She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.
Emil. Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.
Oth. She was false as water.
Emil. Thou art rash as fire, to say
That she was false: O, she was heavenly true!
Oth. Cassio did top her; ask thy husband else.
O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell,
But that I did proceed upon just grounds
To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.

Emil. My husband!
Oth. Thy husband.
Emil. That she was false to wedlock?
Oth. Ay, with Cassio. Nay, had she been true,
If heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I 'ld not have sold her for it.
Emil. My husband!
Oth. Ay, 't was he that told me first:
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.
Emil. My husband!
Oth. What needs this iteration, woman? I say thy husband.
Emil. O mistress, villany hath made mocks with love!
My husband say that she was false!
Oth. He, woman;
I say thy husband: dost understand the word?
My friend, thy husband, honest honest Iago.
Emil. If he say so, may his pernicious soul
Rot half a grain a day! he lies to the heart:
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.
Oth. Ha!
Emil. Do thy worst:
This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven
Than thou wast worthy her.
Oth. Peace, you were best.
Emil. Thou hast not half that power to do me harm
As I have to be hurt. O gull! O dolt!
As ignorant as dirt! thou hast done a deed —

I care not for thy sword; I 'll make thee known,
Though I lost twenty lives.—Help! help, ho! help!
The Moor hath kill'd my mistress! Murder! murder!

Enter Montano, Gratiano, Iago, *and others*

Mon. What is the matter? How now, general!
Emil. O, are you come, Iago? you have done well,
That men must lay their murders on your neck.
Gra. What is the matter?
Emil. Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man:
He says thou told'st him that his wife was false:
I know thou didst not, thou 'rt not such a villain:
Speak, for my heart is full.
Iago. I told him what I thought, and told no more
Than what he found himself was apt and true.
Emil. But did you ever tell him she was false?
Iago. I did.
Emil. You told a lie; an odious, damned lie;
Upon my soul, a lie, a wicked lie.
She false with Cassio! — did you say with Cassio?
Iago. With Cassio, mistress. Go to, charm your tongue.
Emil. I will not charm my tongue; I am bound to speak:
My mistress here lies murder'd in her bed, —
All. O heavens forfend!
Emil. And your reports have set the murder on.
Oth. Nay, stare not, masters: it is true, indeed.
Gra. 'T is a strange truth.
Mon. O monstrous act!
Emil. Villany, villany, villany!

I think upon 't: I think: I smell 't: O villany! —
I thought so then: — I 'll kill myself for grief: —
O villany, villany!

Iago. What, are you mad? I charge you, get you home.

Emil. Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak:

'T is proper I obey him, but not now.
Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.

Oth. O! O! O! [*He falls on the bed.*

Emil. Nay, lay thee down and roar;
For thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent
That e'er did lift up eye.

Oth. [*Rising*] O, she was foul! 200
I scarce did know you, uncle: there lies your niece,
Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly stopp'd:
I know this act shows horrible and grim.

Gra. Poor Desdemona! I am glad thy father 's dead:
Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief
Shore his old thread in twain: did he live now,
This sight would make him do a desperate turn,
Yea, curse his better angel from his side,
And fall to reprobation.

Oth. 'T is pitiful; but yet Iago knows 210
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame
A thousand times committed; Cassio confess'd it:
And she did gratify his amorous works
With that recognizance and pledge of love
Which I first gave her; I saw it in his hand:
It was a handkerchief, an antique token

My father gave my mother.

Emil. O heaven! O heavenly powers!

Iago. Come, hold your peace.

Emil. 'T will out, 't will out: I peace!

No, I will speak as liberal as the north:

Let heaven and men and devils, let them all,

All, all, cry shame against me, yet I 'll speak.

Iago. Be wise, and get you home.

Emil. I will not.

[*Iago offers to stab Emilia.*

Gra. Fie!

Your sword upon a woman?

Emil. O thou dull Moor! that handkerchief thou speak'st of

I found by fortune and did give my husband;

For often with a solemn earnestness,

More than indeed belong'd to such a trifle,

He begg'd o' me to steal it.

Iago. Villanous whore!

Emil. She give it Cassio! no, alas! I found it,

And I did give 't my husband.

Iago. Filth, thou liest!

Emil. By heaven, I do not, I do not, gentlemen.

O murderous coxcomb! what should such a fool

Do with so good a wife?

Oth. Are there no stones in heaven

But what serve for the thunder? — Precious villain!

[*He runs at Iago; Iago, from behind, stabs Emilia, and exit.*

Gra. The woman falls; sure, he hath kill'd his wife.

Emil. Ay, ay: O, lay me by my mistress' side.

Gra. He 's gone, but his wife 's kill'd.

Mon. 'T is a notorious villain. Take you this weapon,
Which I have here recover'd from the Moor:
Come, guard the door without; let him not pass,
But kill him rather. I 'll after that same villain,
For 't is a damned slave.

[*Exeunt Montano and Gratiano.*

Oth. I am not valiant neither,
But every puny whipster gets my sword:
But why should honour outlive honesty?
Let it go all.

Emil. What did thy song bode, lady?
Hark, canst thou hear me? I will play the swan,
And die in music. [*Singing*] Willow, willow, willow. —
Moor, she was chaste; she loved thee, cruel Moor;
So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true;
So speaking as I think, I die, I die. [*Dies.*

Oth. I have another weapon in this chamber;
It is a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper: —
O, here it is. Uncle, I must come forth.

Gra. [*Within*] If thou attempt it, it will cost thee dear:
Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.

Oth. Look in upon me then and speak with me,
Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee.

Re-enter Gratiano

Gra. What is the matter?

Oth. Behold, I have a weapon;

A better never did itself sustain
Upon a soldier's thigh: I have seen the day,
That, with this little arm and this good sword,
I have made my way through more impediments
Than twenty times your stop: but, O vain boast!
Who can control his fate? 't is not so now.
Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd;
Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.
Do you go back dismay'd? 't is a lost fear;
Man but a rush against Othello's breast,
And he retires. Where should Othello go?
Now, how dost thou look now? O ill-starr'd wench!
Pale as thy smock! when we shall meet at compt,
This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,
And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl!
Even like thy chastity. O cursed slave!
Whip me, ye devils,
From the possession of this heavenly sight!
Blow me about in winds! roast me in sulphur!
Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!
O Desdemona! Desdemona! dead!
Oh! Oh! Oh!

Enter Lodovico, Montano, Cassio *carried in a chair, and* Officers *with* Iago, *prisoner*

Lod. Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

Oth. That 's he that was Othello: here I am.

Lod. Where is that viper? bring the villain forth.

Oth. I look down towards his feet; but that 's a fable.

If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.
[*Wounds Iago.*

Lod. Wrench his sword from him.

Iago. I bleed, sir; but not kill'd.

Oth. I am not sorry neither: I 'ld have thee live;
For, in my sense, 't is happiness to die.

Lod. O thou Othello, that wert once so good,
Fall'n in the practice of a damned slave,
What shall be said to thee?

Oth. Why, any thing:
An honourable murderer, if you will;
For nought I did in hate, but all in honour.

Lod. This wretch hath part confess'd his villany:
Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?

Oth. Ay.

Cas. Dear general, I never gave you cause.

Oth. I do believe it, and I ask you pardon.
Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil
Why he hath thus ensnared my soul and body?

Iago. Demand me nothing: what you know, you know:
From this time forth I never will speak word.

Lod. What, not to pray?

Gra. Torments will ope your lips.

Oth. Well, thou dost best.

Lod. Sir, you shall understand what hath befall'n,
Which, as I think, you know not. Here is a letter
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo;
And here another: the one of them imports
The death of Cassio to be undertook
By Roderigo.

Oth. O villain!
Cas. Most heathenish and most gross!
Lod. Now here 's another discontented paper,
Found in his pocket too; and this, it seems,
Roderigo meant to have sent this damned villain;
But that belike Iago in the interim
Came in and satisfied him.
Oth. O the pernicious caitiff!
How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's?
Cas. I found it in my chamber:
And he himself confess'd but even now
That there he dropp'd it for a special purpose
Which wrought to his desire.
Oth. O fool! fool! fool!
Cas. There is besides in Roderigo's letter,
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him
Brave me upon the watch; whereon it came
That I was cast: and even but now he spake,
After long seeming dead, Iago hurt him,
Iago set him on.
Lod. You must forsake this room, and go with us:
Your power and your command is taken off,
And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,
If there be any cunning cruelty
That can torment him much and hold him long,
It shall be his. You shall close prisoner rest,
Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian state. Come, bring him away.
Oth. Soft you; a word or two before you go.
I have done the state some service, and they know 't.

No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice: then must you speak
Of one that loved not wisely but too well;
Of one not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
Perplex'd in the extreme; of one whose hand,
Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away
Richer than all his tribe; of one whose subdued eyes,
Albeit unused to the melting mood,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their medicinal gum. Set you down this;
And say besides, that in Aleppo once,
Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,
I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
And smote him, thus. [*Stabs himself.*

Lod. O bloody period!

Gra. All that 's spoke is marr'd.

Oth. I kiss'd thee ere I kill'd thee: no way but this;
Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.
[*Falls on the bed, and dies.*

Cas. This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon;
For he was great of heart.

Lod. [*To Iago*] O Spartan dog,
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!
Look on the tragic loading of this bed;
This is thy work: the object poisons sight;
Let it be hid. Gratiano, keep the house,

And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,
For they succeed on you. To you, lord governor,
Remains the censure of this hellish villain;
The time, the place, the torture: O, enforce it!
Myself will straight aboard; and to the state
This heavy act with heavy heart relate. [*Exeunt.*

NOTES

[References to Abbott are to his *Shakespearian Grammar*, 1869, etc.]

ACT I — SCENE 1

The first scene introduces us at once to the man who is, single-handed, to contrive the tragic harms, and allows us a brief, vivid glimpse of his two principal victims, whose midnight match has just opened the action. Iago's malicious portrait of Cassio gives us a preliminary notion of his principal tool; while his treatment of the poor dupe Roderigo prepares us for his more diabolical machination in the main plot.

3. ***this,*** the intended elopement. Roderigo, having paid Iago to further his suit to Desdemona, assumes that he has been playing a double game. It does not suit Iago at this stage to throw off the mask.

8 ***f.*** By way of proving that he has not been secretly in league, as Roderigo suspects, with the successful suitor, Iago relates a signal humiliation he has suffered at Othello's hands by his appointment of Cassio as lieutenant. The incident related illustrates Othello's high prestige at Venice, and prepares us for his easy victory in the Senate in I. 3.

bombast circumstance, pompous circumlocution.

19. Iago professes to deride Cassio as a mere arm-chair strategist, who understood nothing of war but its theoretic calculations. Mercutio similarly scoffs at "one that fights by the book of arithmetic" (*Romeo and Juliet*). As to the value of his character of Cassio, see Introduction, § 8.

20. ***a Florentine.*** Florence was reputed one of the capitals of Italian commerce (cf. the coin *florin*); Iago avails himself of this association to clinch his character of Cassio as a mere man of figures — a "book-keeper" in respect of soldiership, as "a Florentine" was likely to be.

21. ***A fellow almost damned in a fair wife.*** No interpretation of this line is quite satisfactory, and no emendation that is even plausible has been proposed. As it stands, the text has an air of hinting at Cassio's marked susceptibility to the attraction of women, a trait of which Iago is later to make effective use. But the charge against

him both in v. 19 before, and in vv. 22–26 after this line, is the quite distinct, though compatible, one of being a bookish theorist; and it is difficult to believe that v. 24 interrupted, instead of supported, this thought.

25. ***toged consuls,*** here of the counsellors of the Venetian senate in their gowns, a purely civilian body. For "consuls" so applied, cf. i. 2. 43: "many of the consuls," &c.

39. ***Whether . . . affined,*** whether I stand in so close a relation to him as to be bound (to love him).

44. ***you shall mark***; the use of "shall" in phrases of this type is colored by its original sense of "be bound, owe." "You are sure to." Cf. Abbott, § 315.

49. ***me,*** the colloquial "ethical dative." Abbott, § 220.

50. ***visages,*** outer semblances.

57. ***Were I,*** &c., if I were chief, I would promptly throw off the "shows of service" which I now practice for my own ends, and which are taken to reflect my character.

61 *f.* ***when my outward action,*** *i. e.* you may as soon expect to find me a weak sentimentalist, the sport of every fool, as a man who sincerely means the deference he professes.

66. ***owe,*** possess.

66. ***thick-lips.*** One of several indications that Shakespeare drew no distinction between the Moorish and the negro types. See Introduction, p. xvii, note.

68. ***Rouse him,*** &c. The first "him" refers naturally to Brabantio, the second and following pronouns to Othello. Iago betrays his real animus by this instant reversion to the object of it. The rousing of the father interests him only as the means of "poisoning" Othello's "delight."

99. ***distempering,*** intoxicating.

100. ***Upon malicious bravery,*** in . . . defiance.

106. ***a grange,*** a farm-house.

107. ***In simple . . . soul,*** in perfect sincerity of purpose.

112. ***nephews,*** grandsons. The word was currently used both thus and for "cousin," as well as for a brother's or sister's child. Shakespeare in his will refers to his grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall, as his *niece*.

124. ***At this odd-even . . . night,*** the time about midnight, a singular and nondescript interval, half-way between the beginning and the end of the night.

126. ***gondolier,*** probably to be scanned góndeler, like píoner, énginer, &c.

128. ***your allowance,*** what you approve.

132. ***from,*** contrary to, in violation of.

136. ***Tying . . . in,*** tying them up in, giving him complete possession of them.

137. ***extravagant and wheeling,*** wandering and gad-about.

146. Iago disdains to use his customary dissimulation with a Roderigo; his motive for getting away before Brabantio appears is the true one. He wants to damage Othello, but he knows that for the moment the stroke will only "gall" him, since the government imperatively need his services, and that he himself cannot therefore break with him.

159. ***the Sagittary.*** Shakespeare doubtless meant this (here and in i. 3. 115) to be the name of an inn; it is immaterial that no such name is recorded among the Venetian inns of that date.

161 *f.* Brabantio's almost incoherent anger helps to drive home two points important for the sequel: (1) that Desdemona's marriage was, to Venetian ideas, a very strange and even revolting one; (2) that she had deceived her father. The second of these prepares us for his parting shaft as he leaves the Senate, "She has deceived her father, and may thee." Brabantio's rage is not mere bluster. The blow of Desdemona's marriage "was mortal to him, and pure grief shore his old thread in twain"; he died at most a few days later, as Gratiano (the "brother" of v. 177) relates at the close (v. 2. 205).

172. ***Is there not charms.*** On this *is* with a plural, cf. Abbott, § 335. It occurs mainly where the subject follows, and where its plurality is unimportant. It is thus better explained as a construction according to the sense than as a relic of the Northern dialect in M. E., where *is* was used throughout the present tense.

SCENE 2

This stirring scene does not yet foreshadow the tragic theme. But it discloses the noble and romantic character of the central figure, known to us hitherto only as a masterful black officer who has run away with a patrician's daughter. Othello's frankness, his quiet dismissal of Iago's would-be politic counsels, his confidence in his integrity ("my perfect soul") no less than in the strength of his position at Venice, convince us that there can, at least, have been nothing mean in his mysterious adventure; while in his union of perfect self-command, instant resource, and repugnance to needless violence, we recognize the finest type of soldier.

6. ***'T is better as it is.*** "How well these words impress the truth of Othello's character of himself at the end: '(He) was not easily wrought' " (Coleridge).

14. ***As double as the duke's,*** *i. e.* his single voice weighed as much as the two votes enjoyed by the president of the council. The two votes were a frequent English usage; that the doge of Venice did not, in fact, enjoy them is immaterial.

22. ***my demerits,*** &c. My deserts entitle me to the rank I hold. The metaphor is from "capping," or doffing the cap (bonnet), to one of superior rank. The word "unbonneted" is loosely formed for 'without doffing the cap," bonneted being used (*Coriolanus*, ii. 2, 30) for "took off their caps" (in deference) (cf. Fr. *bonneter*, take off the cap). "Unbonneted" was also a quite idiomatic form for "not wearing a cap," and was so used by Shakespeare himself of the distracted Lear (*King Lear*, iii. 1. 14).

24. ***For know,*** &c. This touch is our first intimation of the psychical grounds of the marriage, and one of some importance. Othello has lived a joyous, roving, homeless life, free and delighting in freedom; he has surrendered it purely for love of Desdemona.

33. ***By Janus.*** The oath hints at the ambiguous aspect of the body of officers just at hand, taken for "the raised father and his friends," and proving to be "the servants of the duke" and Cassio. In the only other Shakespearean passage where it is used, *Merchant of Venice*, i. 1. 50 ("Now, by two-headed Janus," &c.), there is a direct allusion to contrasts of character and face:

> "Some that will evermore peep through their eyes
> And laugh like parrots at a bagpiper.
> And other of such vinegar aspect
> That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
> Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable."

38. ***haste-post-haste*** (cf. post-post-haste, i. 3. 46).

53. ***Have with you,*** take me with you; I'll go with you.

55. ***be advised,*** consider, take heed.

56. ***Holla,*** &c.; the exclamation was mostly used as a summons to stop. Cf. "cry holla to thy tongue," *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 257.

59. ***Keep . . . rust them.*** "One of Shakespeare's miracles" (Bradley). It is our first hint of Othello's brilliant romantic imagination.

67. ***So opposite to marriage.*** Desdemona, like Othello, has married under the impulse of a sudden attachment, in spite of a pronounced aversion to the married state.

72. ***gross in sense,*** palpable, too obvious for mistake.

75. ***weaken motion,*** impair apprehension, and hence sensible action.

SCENE 3

This great scene — a little drama in itself — completes the preliminary action, and puts us in possession of the most important data of character and incident involved in the tragic sequel. These are particularly: (1) the characters of Othello and Desdemona themselves, as reflected in their impulsive and romantic marriage; (2) the animus and aims of Iago, at length frankly disclosed in the final soliloquy. This passage, it is to be noted, closing the first act, gives the first hint of the nature of the tragic conflict. The entire first act is thus devoted to exposition, the only case of this plot-structure in Shakespeare. At the corresponding point of *Macbeth* we are on the verge of the crucial moment of the play. Cf. Introduction, § 17.

1. ***composition,*** accord, consistency. Cf. the use of "disproportioned" (v. 2).

6. ***where the aim reports,*** where the report is based on a mere guess.

11. ***the main article,*** &c., I accept the substance as true, and it is a terrible truth.

13. ***Enter a sailor.*** The prompt admission of the sailor to the sitting of the Grand Council to give his news, emphasizes the extreme urgency of the case.

18. ***By no assay of reason,*** &c., any reason that may be alleged for believing it, if tested, will be found idle.

20. ***The importancy of Cyprus,*** &c. Cyprus was actually taken by the Turks, in 1570, from the Venetians, who had held it since 1498. The situation represented is that which prevailed at the date of publication of Cinthio's novel (1555).

23. ***more facile question,*** easier discussion (struggle).

24. ***brace,*** state of defense.

25. ***abilities,*** *i. e.* warlike equipment.

30. ***wake and wage,*** rouse and encounter.

44. ***Marcus Luccicos,*** probably an invented name. The context suggests that he was meant to be a Cypriot, whose local or other special knowledge would make him valuable to the expedition. The imperative summons sent to this foreigner, with "post-post-haste dispatch," is the counterpart of that sent, demanding his "haste-post-haste appearance," to the Moorish general, who a moment later appears in answer to it. Othello's employment, we are to gather, was not a freak but an example of the deliberate Venetian policy of using the services of foreigners to conduct their campaigns. "Alwaies they do entertain in honourable sort with great provision

a captain-general, who always is a stranger born" (Contareno, *Commonwealth of Venice*, tr. Lewkenor, 1599).

62. ***For nature . . . could not,*** an anacoluthon, or colloquial construction in irregular syntax.

68. ***read . . . after your own sense,*** interpret as sternly and as literally as you choose.

69. ***Stood in,*** were the object of, exposed to.

73. This simultaneous exclamation marks the Senate's sense of the dilemma into which the guilt of the indispensable general has brought them.

76. Othello's speech is, with Antony's funeral oration in *Julius Cæsar*, the finest Shakespearean example of natural but finished eloquence. His eloquence is the natural utterance of a man, not subtle or shrewd, but "holding a volume of force which in repose ensures pre-eminence without an effort" (Bradley).

95. ***her motion blushed at herself,*** the impulse which drew her to Othello itself felt shame in the presence of her habitually modest spirit. "Herself" is the "motion" personified.

104. ***To vouch this,*** &c. The discovery that the indispensable general is the accused party, enforced by the natural magnetism of his speech and presence, has altered the whole perspective of the case. Othello's speech contains nothing to exculpate him, and even has the air of admitting, in some sense, Brabantio's charges. But it is addressed to men who are now secretly anxious if possible to find him innocent; and the evidence of the "foul proceeding," which at first seemed so convincing that nothing remained but to disclose the culprit, is now slightingly dismissed as "thin habits and poor likelihoods of modern seeming."

108. ***thin habits . . . seeming,*** superficial semblances of guilt based upon mere plausible commonplace. (*Commonplace* is a regular meaning of "modern.")

127. ***And she in mine.*** Othello will not emphasize, but neither will he conceal, the share of Desdemona in effecting their union, as told below. The court must realize that this girl, "still and quiet" as her father believed her to be, and as she was, had not been a passive tool in his hands.

This account of Othello's wooing is only intended to meet the charge of "magic." It must be supplemented by Desdemona's account (iii. 3. 70 *f.*) of Cassio's part in it, and the "many times, when" he had urged Othello's suit.

142. ***It was my hint,*** I had occasion. Cf. v. 166 below.

144. ***men whose heads,*** &c. Cf. *Tempest*, iii. 3. 46 *f.* Gonzalo there mentions those "men whose heads stood in their breasts" as a

regular topic of travelers' reports, and as hence enjoying some credence, though utterly discredited in his youth.

171. ***I think,*** &c. Another sign of Othello's power of suggestion. The duke has not *heard* "this tale," but only Othello's summary reference to it.

191. ***get,*** beget.

195. ***for your sake,*** on account of your action.

199. ***Let me speak like yourself,*** as it would become you to speak. The duke's solution — *i. e.* smilingly to accept defeat instead of sullenly nursing the bootless grief — differs only in spirit and temper from Brabantio's, but that is just the difference requisite for "helping these lovers into your favour."

202 *f.* The rhyme emphasizes the sententious and proverbial character of the duke's argument. At this date Shakespeare hardly used it otherwise, apart from the purely stage device of the final couplet of scenes. See Appendix, Prosody, § II, page 157.

218. ***pierced,*** penetrated, as if to pour balm into it.

220 *f.* The abrupt transition to prose marks the consciousness of both men that it is high time to turn from these jingling platitudes to the urgent business of the hour.

230 *f.* Othello does not love Desdemona less because he returns with "alacrity" (and for an indefinite period) to his soldier's life and work.

232. ***thrice-driven,*** thrice winnowed, so that only the finest and softest of the down remained.

238. ***exhibition,*** allowance for maintenance.

250. A bold variation for "my violent taking of my fortune by storm."

251 *f.* ***subdued . . . lord.*** Desdemona implies that her inner nature has been colored to her husband's hue. In his 111th Sonnet Shakespeare speaks of his nature as being "subdued to what it works in, like the dyer's hand."

265. ***to comply . . . satisfaction.*** This reading, though generally adopted, and involving the least change in the text (*me* for Qq. Ff. *my*), is far from certain. ***Young affects,*** passions of youth; ***proper,*** my own.

267. ***defend . . . think,*** forbid that you should think.

271. ***seel . . . my speculative . . . instruments,*** obscure by the clouds of passion the clear perception it is my duty to maintain.

285. Othello's absolute assurance of Iago's "honesty" — an indispensable condition of the coming tragedy — is attested by his choice of him for this responsible trust. And here he was perfectly safe. It is to be remembered that Iago was not, like Cinthio's "ensign," a rejected lover of Desdemona.

290. ***delighted,*** delightful.

322 ***ff.*** An interesting example of Iago's prose, intensely rational and abnormally emotionless.

328. ***corrigible.*** The terminations *-ible, -able* were still used in an active as well as in a passive sense. So *perdurable* (v. 343). Abbott, § 3.

345. ***defeat thy favour,*** disguise thy face.

349. ***answerable sequestration,*** corresponding separation.

352. ***luscious as locusts.*** Gerarde in his *Herbal* records the belief as then prevalent that the "locusts" of the gospel meant the fruit of the carob tree, a pod full of sweet juice. Shakespeare's usage is probably to be thus understood.

353. ***coloquintida,*** a bitter fruit used in sixteenth-century medicine.

373. ***my cause is hearted,*** *i. e.* my heart is in it.

392. By the word "sport" Iago betrays, what he does not acknowledge even to himself, that the motives he advances for his plot are not those which provide the actual driving power.

399. ***plume up,*** crown with triumph.

409 ***f.*** Furness cites an account of the actor Fechter in this scene: while meditating revenge, he "sits on the angle of the table," "leaning his forehead on his hands, his face hidden," but at "How? how? let's see," he "slowly raises his head and shows his face, which gradually brightens with a diabolical smile." At the last word of the scene he "breaks into a savage, ringing laugh."

ACT II — SCENE 1

The action is now transferred to Cyprus, the scene of the tragedy proper, and the four principal persons concerned in it arrive in succession. Iago's plot is not yet clearly shaped in his mind; but we get further insight into the characters about which he is to weave its deadly meshes, particularly into those dangerous innocences by which they will unconsciously play into his hands. This is facilitated by the separate arrivals. Thus we witness Cassio's enthusiasm for Desdemona, and Desdemona's anxiety for Othello. The culminating moment, their rapturous meeting, makes clear what the first act left open, that their union, however romantic in origin, had called forth in both a deep mutual devotion. It suits Iago's purpose to make light of this to his "poor trash of Venice"; but he sees it clearly himself, and it adds the spice of difficulty to the relish of his game.

9. ***hold the mortise,*** *i. e.* not to be disjointed.

15. ***guards,*** *i. e.* the stars of the constellation of the Bear.

26. ***A Veronesa,*** probably a description of the ship as equipped by Verona, one of the Venetian dependencies on the mainland. Qq. Ff. make the word an epithet of Cassio, who has, however, been already described as a Florentine.

38, 39. ***Even till . . . regard,*** strain our eyes in searching the horizon till the sea and sky seem to meet together. "Indistinct" retains more of the etymological sense, undistinguished, in Shakespearean usage than in ours. Cf. "make it *indistinct,* as water is in water," *Antony and Cleopatra,* iv. 14. 10.

39. ***aerial,*** pronounced *érial,* and so written in the Folio (Ff. "th' Eriall blew").

43. Cassio's personal devotion to Othello, which goes far beyond the claims of loyalty to a military chief, prepares us for his overwhelming grief at dismissal, and this for Desdemona's compassionate obstinacy in seeking his reinstatement, the one act by which she herself definitely contributes to her fate.

49. ***of very . . . allowance,*** of well-reputed and tried skill. Cassio's excitement throughout this scene is reflected in the hyperbolical looseness and fervid coloring of his speech. It is the antithesis of the hard, close-packed, grimly logical speech of Iago.

50, 51. ***Therefore . . . cure.*** Allowing for the traits just adverted to, Cassio may be understood to mean, in substance: "As I left him in danger, I never indulged hopes to the extravagant degree which makes disappointment crushing; and he has a good ship and a tried pilot, so that, in addition, I may confidently look to their fulfilment."

64, 65. ***in the essential . . . ingener.*** In what nature has made her outdoes what any inventor could contrive.

69. ***gutter'd,*** indented, hence angular, jagged.

112. ***Saints in your injuries,*** you do malicious acts with an air of sanctity.

113. ***Players in your housewifery,*** triflers in the serious business of housekeeping (pronounced *hús(w)ifry*). "Housewife" (husif) was further contracted to "hussy," with the disparaging sense played upon, together with that of "sparing," "grudging," in the following clause.

120. ***critical***; always used in Shakespeare of those who pass satirical or censorious judgments. "Some satire, keen and critical" (*Midsummer-Night's Dream,* v. 54). To be "critical" therefore excluded the giving of praise, however well deserved.

121, 122. These lines contain the explanation of the following colloquy with Iago. Desdemona is distracted by anxiety for Othello (cf. her question, v. 120), and seeks this relief.

125. Iago can (cf. v. 118) produce "praise" only by an effort of sheer intellect. The results bear the stamp of his strong, hard wit; but his native cynicism soaks through the barrier of his insincere art and turns these artificial compliments into bitter sarcasms.

147. ***put on the vouch,*** provoke the acknowledgment.

156. ***To change,*** &c., to accept the worse in exchange for the better.

161. The utmost merit in a woman qualifies her only to rear babies and keep petty accounts.

166. The courtly Cassio chivalrously excuses Iago's drastic sarcasms: he is a soldier, and this bluntness, which would be bad manners in a scholar, is merely the flavor of his profession.

175, 176. ***play the sir in.*** Cassio is going beyond the deferential politeness of the lieutenant to his general's wife, to play the courtly gentleman.

177. ***clyster-pipes,*** tubes used in medical injections. Iago wishes him a disease.

191 *f.* ***If it were now to die,*** &c. Othello's thought is at bottom only the sense of the instability of extreme bliss which pre-Aeschylean Greece conveyed in the gross belief that human prosperity provoked the jealousy of the gods, the Middle Ages still more crudely by the myth of Fortune's wheel, and we ourselves by the familiar reflection that "it is too good to last." But Shakespeare has given it in a form original and beautiful, and exquisitely expressive of the vehement but finely-poised passion of the speaker. In Desdemona's rejoinder the different temper of her mind and of her love are beautifully indicated. He is more intense, she more sympathetic. He thinks of the ecstatic moments she has brought him, she of the common and continuous joys of married life.

216 *f.* ***as, they say,*** &c. The observation is proverbial. Butler quotes an early example from Plato: "No man is so base that Love himself would not make him of a god-like courage, equal to one most valiant by nature" (*Sympos.* 149). Iago requires Roderigo's help as his tool, and will not yet break with him; but he can insult him to his face with perfect security.

223. ***thus,*** *i. e.* to thy lips. In other words, "Listen, and don't talk."

240. ***no further conscionable,*** &c. Cassio's courtesy (Iago insinuates) is not the expression of an honorable nature, but a mere cloak for his profligate designs.

282, 283. ***whose qualification . . . again,*** whose tempering or appeasement will only be effected. "Qualify" in Shakespeare is regularly used in this sense; cf. *e. g.* "this inundation of mistempered humour Rests by you only to be qualified" (*King John*, v. 1. 13, &c.).

296. ***apt,*** natural, and thus easily believed, even if it is not true.

312, 313. ***whom I trash For his quick hunting.*** Trash is Steevens's emendation for F 1 trace, Q 1 "crush." Trash is a hunting term for a heavy collar used to keep a hound back. "Whom I hold in check for my own purpose from his pursuit of Desdemona." The plot against Cassio was a side-issue, for which Roderigo was to be used. Roderigo himself falls upon the same metaphor below (ii. 3. 370) to describe his situation.

315. ***in the rank garb,*** *i. e.* as wanton.

316. ***For I fear . . . too.*** The character of Iago's plot against Cassio is admirably conveyed by this assertion, as an afterthought, of a possible ground of quarrel with him. This defense had not occurred to him when originally conceiving his plot (*i.* 3. 398 *f.*).

SCENE 2

9. ***offices,*** the service-quarters of the house, hence especially the stores of food and drink. Cf. "all our offices have been oppress'd with riotous feeders" (*Timon of Athens,* ii. 1. 167).

SCENE 3

This important scene opens Iago's intrigue, and shows the first step in it, the disgrace of Cassio, carried out with complete success. Othello, Cassio, Roderigo, Montano are all his dupes, but his action and counsel are so speciously "honest," and in part so undeniably sound, that no loop-hole is left open, as yet, even for suspicion. He acts perfectly the part of a boon companion in making Cassio drunk, that of a kindly but responsible officer in reporting to his chief, that of a shrewd and sympathetic comrade in counselling his victim how to proceed in seeking redress.

31. ***a brace.*** They are in fact three (v. 57 below).

32. ***a measure,*** *i. e.* of wine; the "stoup" (2 quarts) just mentioned.

41. ***craftily qualified,*** prudently diluted.

42. ***innovation.*** In Elizabethan English, regularly a change for the worse.

58. ***That hold . . . distance,*** that resent the least approach to insult, easily provoked to quarrel.

91 *f.* A stanza from a ballad preserved in the Percy Folio MS., and published in the *Reliques.* The king is there "Henry." King Stephen's breeches "that cost him but a crown" were a stock Elizabethan allusion.

104. Cassio's honorable instincts sound a muffled call in his obfuscated brain, but are not wholly suppressed. Cf. v. 116.

127. It was by speciously fair judgments of this kind that Iago won his reputation for "honesty." Cf. v. 147 *f.*

136. ***He'll watch,*** &c., *i. e.* two circuits of the clock-hand, twenty-four hours.

170. ***turned Turks.*** Othello plays bitterly upon the phrase, which was used proverbially of a change for the worse. The change here in question was precluded for the Turks by their Mohammedan law.

175. ***dreadful.*** The precise shade of meaning is given by the next clause. Cf. v. 214.

185. ***peevish odds,*** idle quarrel, one begun on a trifling provocation.

188. ***Michael.*** This intimate address, marking Othello's affectionate confidence in the lieutenant whom he had preferred even to "honest Iago," is here used for the last time. When cashiered, though Othello still "loves" him, he becomes and remains "Cassio."

216. ***on the . . . safety,*** a mixture of the phrases "court of guard" (main guard-house) and "guard of safety." Othello, in his rising passion, exasperated that the very place appointed to maintain order should have been the scene of a dangerous disturbance, uses language clear to the sense rather than to grammar.

218. ***partially affined,*** made partial by any tie. Montano suspects that Iago may try to shield his brother officer.

231 *f.* Iago artfully plays upon the anxiety which Othello has already expressed.

273. ***in his mood,*** in a fit of anger. Cf. *e. g.* "who in my mood I stabb'd unto the heart" (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. 1. 51). For *cast* see Glossary.

280. ***speak parrot.*** Cf. for the construction, "he speaks nothing but madman" (*Twelfth Night*, i. 5, 115).

347. ***fruitful,*** &c., generous, giving without stint.

355. ***parallel,*** *i. e.* corresponding to my arrangement.

358. ***suggest,*** tempt.

392. ***jump,*** just, at the very moment.

ACT III — SCENE 1

This short scene brings us several steps nearer to the "solicitation" of Desdemona by Cassio on which Iago, as the last lines of Act ii. indicate, relies for the first suggestion of suspicion. Emilia and Desdemona, it seems, as well as Othello himself (v. 51), are anxious for Cassio's restoration, which would clearly have come about after

an interval. It is a part of Iago's good luck that Cassio, tortured by his disgrace, cannot wait the event, but invokes Desdemona's intercession on the very morning after the brawl. His provision of music, played with morning greetings, as was usual, under the windows of the bridal chamber, was itself a tacit appeal to Othello's clemency, an appeal which Othello, suspecting its origin, peremptorily rejects. For the clown, see Introduction, p. xxxvi.

42. Cassio, himself a Florentine, finds Iago's "kind and honest" demeanor worthy of his own countrymen. It naturally impresses him the more, since Desdemona's appeal, which Iago was furthering, would if successful destroy his prospect of succeeding to Cassio's coveted post. The Venetians were proverbially crafty. The reputed "cunning" of Venetian women made it easier to break down Othello's faith in the exceptional purity of Desdemona. Cf. iv. 2. 88.

43. Emilia shows her good-natured sympathy with Cassio by giving him his forfeited title.

45. ***your displeasure,*** *i. e.* the disfavor you have incurred.

47. ***she speaks for you stoutly.*** We are to suppose that Emilia has already "moved her mistress" in this sense; but Desdemona's friendly disposition towards Cassio would make her action natural in any case.

52. ***To take . . . front.*** Compare "take time by the forelock," a parallel version of the same saying.

SCENE 3

This, commonly called the "temptation scene," consists in reality of six scenes.

(1) ***Desdemona and Cassio*** (1–34). Desdemona, led by Emilia's persuasion and her chivalrous interest in Cassio, assures him of her advocacy with engaging but dangerous frankness. Othello and Iago approaching at the moment when she is imploring him to stay, Iago promptly makes use of the opening thus provided.

(2) ***Desdemona's first pleading with Othello*** (41–92). Othello is clearly irritated by Cassio's importunity. Desdemona he does not yet dream of suspecting, but he is justly irritated by the impolitic urgency with which she tries to bind him to a time, and finally dismisses her with an impatience hardly concealed by its courteous form.

(3) ***Iago's first colloquy with Othello*** (92–276). Iago now begins to exploit with extraordinary skill the materials so far available against Cassio, and circumspectly to suggest Desdemona's complicity. His dark hints of something which he is resolved not to betray intimate that his secret touches Othello more nearly than

any fault of Cassio alone. Presently he warns Othello against jealousy, and insinuates the word "cuckold." All this acting upon Othello's nature with maddening effect, Iago can now, with an air of reluctant submission, note the possible grounds for suspicion against Desdemona.

(4) *Othello and Desdemona* (279–289). The dropping of the handkerchief which is to provide Iago with his deadliest shaft; a pure accident, a part of his fabulous good luck.

(5) *Emilia and Iago* (290–329). Iago, with hardly concealed joy, takes possession of the handkerchief.

(6) *Iago's second colloquy with Othello* (330–end). The poison has now entered Othello's soul. On his demanding ocular proof, Iago adduces two pieces of evidence, Cassio's dream, and his possession of Desdemona's handkerchief. The latter being apparently substantiated, Othello is convinced; in a sublime poetic image, he declares that his purpose of revenge is fixed, and Iago, who has all styles at his command, simulates his exaltation.

23. *Watch him tame,* as hawks were tamed by being kept from sleep.

51. *call him back, i. e.* replace him in office.

66. *Out of their best, i. e.* even of the best warriors.

not . . . check, hardly deserving so much as a private reprimand.

91. *and when I love thee not . . . again,* a vivid Elizabethan way of saying "should I not love thee, chaos would come again." His words express a nature so completely penetrated and possessed by the exaltation of love that it would fall to pieces should love be withdrawn.

122. *tricks of custom,* conventional phrases.

123. *close delations,* &c., secret disclosures of the truth issuing from a heart unswayed by passion.

127. *those that be not,* &c., I wish that those that are not what they seem would not seem what they are not.

129. Iago uses the distinction just drawn between seeming and being to give an equivocal testimony to Cassio's honesty. He "thinks" him honest, that is, he "seems" honest, but that is no guarantee that he is.

131. *as to thy thinkings,* with as little reserve as to thy own thoughts.

134. *free to, i. e.* free to refuse.

138 *f.* In the purest breast suspicions of guilt have their legitimate place, and sit in judgment upon the supposed culprits with reflections under these conditions lawful. *Leets* were district-courts held half-yearly for the trial of non-capital offences.

151. *scattering,* straggling.

166. *green-eyed . . . mock.* Some modern editors have thought it necessary to change "mock" to "make"; but the text as it stands was well explained by Hunter: "Jealousy mocks the person who surrenders his mind to her influence . . . sporting herself with his agonized feelings, just as the feline tribe sport with the prey which they have got into their power."

167. *that cuckold,* &c., *i. e.* the betrayed husband, who already knows the worst, and has withdrawn his love from the faithless wife, is happy in comparison with one who is tormented by doubt, and fears without being able to resign his love.

182. *exsufflicate and blown,* swollen, as with air; windy, idle.

206. Iago almost verbally repeats Brabantio's parting shaft. The effect, for Othello, is to add the authority of her father's evidence to the presumption of her guilt.

225. *honest,* chaste (as commonly).

250. *strain his entertainment, i. e.* urge his restoration to favor.

260 *f. If I do prove her . . . fortune.* If I find her untameable (false to her wifely duty), I will sever the ties that bind us, though I should rend my heart to do it, and cast her loose to seek adventures at will. The *haggard,* in falconry, was a wild, untameable hawk; the *jesses,* thongs of leather bound to the hawk's legs, by which it was secured.

276. *this forked plague, i. e.* a wife's infidelity, symbolized by the thorns.

283. Othello plays grimly upon the idea indicated in the last note. Desdemona, with an innocence which might have disarmed the suspicion, as her appearance so nearly does, takes the words literally.

288. The stage direction here is modern.

296. *ta'en out,* copied.

312. *to the advantage,* availing myself of the favorable opportunity.

318. *Be not acknown on it,* do not admit your knowledge of it.

328. *I did say so.* Othello's face bears witness to the inner torment which Iago has just described.

330. *mandragora,* a narcotic made of the mandrake root.

385. *I think . . . is not.* Othello thinks, or believes he thinks, two opposite thoughts at once; one to which he still desperately clings in spite of the facts, and one to which the facts have all but forced his assent. The subjunctive *be,* so far as it has any effect, suggests that the first statement is less assured.

428. *a foregone conclusion,* something already accomplished.

453. *Like to the Pontic sea,* &c. The image, turned into high poetry by the passion of Othello, is taken almost unaltered from the

matter-of-fact description of Pliny, as translated by Philemon Holland (1601): "And the sea Pontus evermore floweth and runneth out into Propontis, but the sea never retireth back again within Pontus."

SCENE 4

The two lines of Iago's plot — Cassio's disgrace leading to Desdemona's pleading for his reinstatement, and the suspicious disappearance of the handkerchief leading to Othello's fierce demand for it — now meet in a focus of unsurpassed dramatic intensity. The impetuous resolve of Othello to have assurance of the worst, and Desdemona's chivalrous importunity, concur with deadly effect. Her doom is now sealed.

16. The clown's "catechize" carries on the allusion suggested by Desdemona's "edified."

26. ***cruzadoes,*** a Portuguese gold coin.

38. ***fruitfulness and liberal heart,*** generosity; but with a covert allusion to the other senses of fruitfulness (fertility) and liberal (licentious).

40. ***sequester,*** sequestration, removal.

74. ***mummy,*** the juice of mummies used for magical purposes. In *Macbeth*, iv. 1. 23, "witches' mummy" is one of the ingredients of the cauldron. Here the juice is specifically derived from maidens' hearts.

99. ***the happiness!*** *i. e.* happily encountered.

108. Emilia finds her belief in Othello's jealousy (v. 30) confirmed. It has been lightly thought incredible that Emilia, at this point, should not recollect the incident of the handkerchief's loss. Her promptness in putting the topic aside, itself indicates that she is only suppressing what she knows. To tell what she knew would have been to disclose that it was in Iago's hands, and to provoke his instant wrath. But she does not until the disclosure scene even suspect a connection between his borrowing of the handkerchief and its provocation of this "jealousy" in Othello.

119. ***But to know,*** merely to know.

128. ***within the blank,*** &c., exposed to its full brunt (as the bull's eye of the target).

134. ***I have seen the cannon,*** &c. Iago's style is habitually compressed and often, as here, elliptical. He leaves it to be understood that Othello has suffered these losses unmoved.

141. ***some unhatched practice,*** &c., a plot discovered before it was ripe for execution.

149. *look for such observances,* &c., the punctilious respect, natural at a burial ceremony.

151. *unhandsome warrior,* &c., a poor soldier, unworthy to accompany any husband to camp.

156. *jealous toy,* idle suspicion.

173. *a week away.* See Appendix II.

180. *Take . . . out.* See iii. 3. 296.

182. *to the felt absence,* &c., *i. e.* in addition to the pain of Cassio's absence she now suffers from the cause she imputes it to.

194. *addition,* honor.

198. *soon at night,* after nightfall.

201. *I must be circumstanced,* I must comply with circumstances, put up with things as they are.

ACT IV — SCENE 1

Iago's strategy in this final phase of his deadly game has two phases. In the first he forces Othello to face the full import of the two strong points already made — Cassio's "confession" and the loss of the handkerchief — with the result that Othello falls in a trance. Then he clinches the effect with his most audacious device — his overheard conversation with Cassio. Only a mind saturated, as Othello's is, and as Iago knows that it is, with the "poison," could be gulled by so gross an imposture. Desdemona's death was already decided. He now gives definite orders for "poison" — recalled, at Iago's sinister suggestion (he is an artist in crime), in favor of the more "pleasing justice" of death by strangling. But the tragic climax is the blow — provoked by her innocently frank professions of "love" for Cassio, and joy (as he takes her to mean) in his promotion. The purpose of this otherwise not very clearly motived arrival of Lodovico from Venice at this point is that she may express in Othello's presence her naïve desire to "atone" them.

6. *i. e.* they feign sin to delude the devil.

40 *f.* It cannot be for nothing that I feel a passion so full of imagined shapes (the confused vision of the "handkerchief" and the "confessions" evoked by Iago). Mere "words" might be illusory. On the use of prose here, see Appendix I, pp. 154–55.

42. *noses, ears, and lips,* half inarticulate ejaculations called forth by the image of the lovers' supposed familiarities reflected in his tortured and now ebbing consciousness.

61. *Dost thou mock me?* He suspects an allusion to "horns."

69 *f.* *unproper,* which they share unwittingly with others. *peculiar,* solely their own.

72. *secure,* free from fear of rivalry.

76. *in a patient list,* in the bounds of patience.

82. *encave, i. e.* hide.

102. *unbookish,* uninstructed.

122. *customer,* wanton woman.

130. *Have you scored me?* have you made my reckoning, *i. e.* settled accounts with me as Desdemona's actual husband.

150. *before me,* an exclamation of surprise — "God possess me!"

218. *unprovide,* throw into disorder.

248. Desdemona thinks of Othello's recall only as a joyful and triumphant return home; he, knowing that he is in reality cashiered, supposes her to be "glad" at the honor conferred on Cassio and his own humiliation. After the blow, not knowing how otherwise to explain it, she supposes that after all he must be displeased by his recall. Hence her helpless attempt below (ii. 34–5) to soothe him.

256. *teem with,* be made pregnant by.

257. *falls,* lets fall.

SCENE 2

Othello's infatuation, wrought step by step to the point of agonized but undoubting conviction, has so far been carefully guarded by Iago from contact with those who had a clue to the truth. Cassio, the most dangerous of all, after being used to clinch the deceit, is to be put out of the way (iv. 1. 224). Emilia, on the contrary, who was destined to ruin his calculations, though not in time to save her mistress, gives him no concern. This is *his* infatuation, like Macbeth's faith in the stability of Birnam wood. He despised her too completely to take precautions on her account, and till the close, with good ground. She has already witnessed Othello's "jealousy": she is now for the first time directly confronted by it. She bears witness warmly and indignantly to her mistress's innocence, but Othello is now impervious to evidence, even had hers not been impaired by her dubious reputation (v. 21–3). Scorning Emilia's plea, he now in the wonderful passage which follows — half-bitter, quasi-judicial questioning, half-rapt ejaculations of a soul struggling in agony — brings the charge for the first time directly home to his wife. Loathing and inextinguishable passions contend in him, as foulness and heavenly beauty mingle, he thinks, in her.

Then we are shown the effect of this overwhelming blow upon her uncomprehending, innocent, but rather helpless soul. It leaves her at first dazed and almost speechless. And it is not to Emilia, with her warm indignation, but to "good" Iago, with his crocodile pity,

that she turns confidently for help; a stroke of Shakespearean irony which greatly enhances the pathos.

Iago's final passage with Roderigo belongs only outwardly to this scene. If driven to bay, even Roderigo might harm Iago's credit by betraying his part in the pursuit of Desdemona. Iago's skilful *coup* disposes of him and Cassio — either or both — at the same time.

3. ***she.*** The substitution of the nominative for the accusative is common in Elizabethan and later English after *and; e. g.* "All debts are cleared between you and I" (*Merchant of Venice*, iii. 2. 318).

28. ***Some of your function;*** pertaining to Emilia in the character alluded to in vv. 20 *f.* Believing his wife to be unfaithful, he bitterly treats her as an inmate, and Emilia as the keeper, of a house of ill-fame. Hence the allusion to her "mystery" (calling), v. 30, and the ironical offer of "payment," v. 93.

54 *f.* A disputed passage. The imagery seems to represent Othello as standing motionless while the concentrated scorn of his age points him out relentlessly. The reading "slow unmoving" is that of Q, but the F reading, "slow and moving," may be right — the equivalent of "slowly moving"; in that case the finger of time is thought of as moving like the hand of a clock.

72. ***committed.*** Desdemona had used the word in the general sense as applied to any fault; Othello takes it in the special sense as applied to adultery. Cf. "Commit not with man's sworn spouse" (*King Lear*, iii. 4. 48).

77. ***winks,*** closes her eye.

104. ***go by water,*** *i. e.* be uttered with tears.

107. This line is probably addressed to Emilia; the two following are soliloquy. Hence the "Exit" might better be indicated after 107.

130. ***eternal.*** The word was used as an epithet of vague abuse, like our "infernal." So "the eternal devil" (*Julius Cæsar*, i. 2. 160).

132. ***to get some office.*** In spite of this phrase it must not be supposed that Emilia is covertly hinting that her husband is the "man." She does not yet suspect him, as is shown by her amazed iteration at v. 2. 146 *f.*

144. ***Speak within door,*** with the sarcastic suggestion that her vehement outburst will be heard in the street.

146 *f.* This reduces to its true dimensions Iago's calumnious suggestion at i. 3. 393.

SCENE 3

The scene adds little or nothing to the progress of the action — merely Othello's curt order to his wife to go to bed and dismiss Emilia, and her unquestioning compliance. But it adds material

traits to the portraits of both women. Desdemona, stunned by the consciousness that Othello has ceased to love her, has lost all trace of the girlish spirit which had provoked her brave intervention for Cassio. It had served her ill then; but a question to Emilia about the handkerchief might now have brought out the truth in time to save her. As it is, she goes helplessly to her doom. Her colloquy with Emilia shows that it proceeds from a purity of soul so absolute that it cannot entertain the thought of infidelity under whatever provocation; while Emilia's knowledge of the world is seen to go with the vulgar conception of wedded fidelity as a bargain, binding on the wife only so long as the husband observes it. Dr. Bradley points out the frequency in Shakespearean tragedy of a scene, like this, of tender and pathetic beauty, shortly before the catastrophe. So the meeting of Lear and Cordelia (iv. 7), the talk of Lady Macduff with her little son (iv. 2), the madness of Ophelia (iv. 5).

27. ***mad,*** wild, wanton; and hence faithless.

31, 32. ***I have much to do, but,*** &c., I can hardly refrain from, &c.

41. A ballad very similar to this of Desdemona's is to be found in the Pepys collection at Oxford; and music for it occurs in a lute book of 1583; the setting is reproduced in Furness's New Variorum edition, p. 278.

52. ***Let nobody,*** &c. This line, so perfectly expressive of Desdemona's own feeling, comes to her mind, by sheer force of aptness, out of its context; an exquisite trait.

73. ***joint ring,*** a ring with joints.

75. ***exhibition,*** allowance.

84. ***to the vantage,*** to boot.

88 *f.* The change to verse here indicates the transition to a more serious mood. Emilia now puts forward what she regards as the real excuse for the infidelity of wives.

92. ***having,*** allowance.

ACT V — SCENE 1

A scene of action. The critical moment in Iago's affairs ("the night that either makes me or fordoes me quite") is come. Roderigo can no longer be deluded; Cassio, too, is a standing peril to the success of his plot. Both, therefore, he now decides, must die; the attack already arranged is likely to dispose of one at least; Iago privately resolves to complete the work, and (as in the drinking scene in Act ii) to win fresh credit for his "honest" and loyal intervention. It is a very dark night (v. 42) and identities are at fault. With one exception his calculations succeed. Cassio is not mortally

wounded, and will later clinch the demonstration of Iago's guilt (v. 2. 299 *f.*).

1. ***this bulk,*** some projecting part of the (timber) houses in the street.

14. ***Live Roderigo.*** The construction of a conditional sentence with the subjunctive of the simple verb was still current in Elizabethan English (Modern English: "should Roderigo live"). Cf. "Prove this a prosperous day, the three-nook'd world Shall bear the olive freely" (*Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 6. 6).

29. Othello's first words (v. 28), as he entered in the darkness, expressed only a strong surmise, which he now, and again at v. 31 (" 'T is he"), finds confirmed.

37. ***no passage?*** are there no people about?

42. ***heavy,*** dark, and thus favorable to treachery such as Lodovico suspects.

47. ***cries on murder,*** cries "Murder!" as for help.

106. ***gastness,*** expression of horror. Bianca loves Cassio in her fashion, and is genuinely terrified for his safety. Iago uses her "stare" as a presumption of her guilt.

SCENE 2

The comprehensive closing scene opens with the catastrophe of the tragic action, followed, with the most rigorous dramatic sequence, by the discovery, the flight, and arrest of Iago, and the death of Othello.

The transitions in Othello's mood up to the moment of the murder are marked with wonderful delicacy. His resolution has been taken, and does not for a moment flag; if anguish forces tears from him as he watches her asleep, they are "cruel tears," which will not arrest the stroke. When she wakes and speaks, he recovers self-possession, putting his brief, ominous questions with a forced calm more terrible than violence, yet betraying increasing inward agitation in the movement of his eyes and lips. Her naïve declaration that all her "sin" was love for him does not touch him. But when she meets his direct charge with eager denial, his patience gives way, his heart grows "stony," and the "ill-starred" words in which she seems to grieve that her guilt and Cassio's is discovered, precipitate her doom.

The knocking of Emilia (distantly paralleled by the knocking at the castle gates in *Macbeth*) preludes the discovery. Her splendid defiance, first of Othello, then of her husband, is the great feature of the following section of the scene. Iago's masterful game is completely checkmated by this attack from the one quarter he

thought secure, and, with the fatuity which even an able criminal will often display in such a situation, he gives himself away by futile violence and futile flight. Cassio's explanation of the letters of Roderigo leaves the case completely clear.

Othello's assaults upon Iago are momentary impulses, consciously futile. Finally, when about to end all, he rises to a height of clear judgment upon himself, with the penetrating insight which calamity brings to the least introspective of Shakespeare's tragic heroes.

1. ***It is the cause,*** &c. Othello steels himself to his deed — to which the sight of her innocent beauty gives new poignancy — by fastening on the thought that he is the instrument of offended justice.

18, 19. ***Be thus . . . and love thee after,*** *i. e.* be thus . . . and I will love thee after, notwithstanding that I shall have caused thy death.

40. ***They are loves I bear to you.*** She thinks of her deception of her father, for what else can he mean?

52. ***presently,*** immediately, in a moment (not "after an interval").

61. ***love.*** The word could then denote a merely kindly feeling such as Desdemona might properly entertain for Cassio.

63 ***f. stone,*** petrify. Desdemona's "infidelity" caused Othello rather anguish than hate; her "perjury" rouses his indignation, and he will now kill her because he desires her blood, not as an offering which he is bound to make.

72. ***ta'en order,*** given orders, taken measures.

76. Desdemona means that Cassio, who could have vindicated her innocence and his own, has been treacherously slain, involving her in ruin.

82. ***Being done,*** &c., all being now irrevocably settled, there is no further respite.

88. ***So, so.*** At these words, according to an old stage tradition, Othello stabs Desdemona, completing the work begun by stifling her; but there is no warrant for this in the text. On the situation which permits Desdemona to speak audibly after having been strangled, Furness consulted several distinguished surgeons; see their replies in the New Variorum edition, pp. 302–307. One of them, Dr. William Hunt, stated that if we assume that Othello broke the cricoid cartilege of Desdemona's larynx the details that follow are "exactly in accordance with the ordinary sequence of symptoms."

101. ***yawn at alteration,*** gape or burst open as with horror at the change. On this passage Bradley comments: "A blackness suddenly intervenes between his eyes and the world; he takes it for the shud-

dering testimony of nature to the horror he has just heard." (*Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 196.)

107. ***What, now?*** Othello starts at the unintended aptness of the words.

109. ***the very error of the moon.*** The moon has swung from her appointed path into the neighborhood of the earth, so that her "stroke," which produces "lunacy," is more deadly.

129. ***She's, like a liar, gone,*** &c. The words revolt us, and have been thought "unlike Othello," in the sense of being untrue to his character. But in these first moments he is completely unmanned; his mind reels, and this savage phrase may be regarded as equivalent to a violent oath, repudiating his denial of guilt just before in an access of fierce sincerity.

144. ***such another,*** *i. e.* as this world.

151. ***hath made mocks with love,*** has made sport with, deluded, tricked Othello's love for his wife.

157. ***filthy,*** in allusion to Othello's color.

177. ***apt,*** natural, easily accounted for (cf. ii. 1. 296).

220. ***liberal,*** without restraint or regard.

239. ***notorious,*** see Glossary. Iago was universally reputed "honest." His villainy, "notorious" enough in the Elizabethan sense, was only now discovered.

253. ***the ice-brook's temper.*** Spanish swords were said to be tempered by being plunged, straight from the forge, in an ice-cold brook.

268. ***sea-mark,*** a mark or beacon set up for the guidance of ships; hence goal or terminus.

287. ***a fable.*** That the devil's feet were cloven.

299. ***Dear general,*** &c. "One is sure Cassio had never used that adjective before. . . . It tells us that his hero is no longer unapproachably above him" (Bradley).

314. ***another discontented paper,*** the ground of the "discontent" appearing below, v. 323 *f.*

338–359. "As he speaks these final words in which all the glory and agony of his life . . . seem to pass before us, like the pictures that flash before the eyes of a drowning man, a triumphant scorn for the fetters of the flesh and the littleness of all the lives that must survive him sweeps our grief away, and when he dies upon a kiss, the most painful of tragedies leaves us for the moment free from pain, and exulting in the power of 'love and man's unconquerable mind.'" (Bradley: *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 198.)

339. Othello recalls his services merely to get a hearing after the order has been given. But he will not have it imagined that he means

to claim any remission of punishment on that score; hence brushes the matter immediately aside.

347. ***the base Indian.*** No incident is known to which this can be thought to refer directly, but ignorance of the value of jewels, on the part of savages, seems to have been a familiar theme. The F text reads "Judean," which some editors prefer, believing that Othello compares himself with Judas.

353. ***turban'd.*** The turban conveyed to the Elizabethans suggestions of ferocity and paganism. Cf. "giants may get through and keep their impious turbans on" (*Cymbeline*, iii. 3. 6).

371. ***this heavy act,*** the whole tragic story.

APPENDIX I

PROSODY

SUMMARY

I. Verse and Prose.
II. Rhyme.
III. Scansion.
1. Elizabethan Pronunciation.
2. Metre: The Norm.
3. Normal Variations.
(i) Extra Syllables.
(ii) Variations in the Pauses.
(iii) Variations in the Stress
4. Abnormal Variations.
(i) Abnormally Long Verses.
(ii) Abnormally Short Verses.

I. VERSE AND PROSE

1. Contrary to classical and other foreign precedent, Shakespeare, like most of his contemporaries and successors, mingled verse and prose in the same play, in the same scene, and even in the same speech.

2. Up to about 1597 the distribution between them which prevails later in his work is not yet established. The influence of Marlowe in particular made for the uniform use of verse; this is almost exclusively used in the early Histories, while in the later (*1* and *2 Henry IV* and *Henry V*) about half is prose. It may be taken as certain that had *King John* (*e.g.*) been written in 1599 the earlier speeches of Falconbridge would have been prose. From about 1597 onward the distribution is guided by certain principles, which can in general be recognized. The precise explanation of particular passages is often doubtful. But it is important to realize that the use of prose and verse is never arbitrary.

3. These principles may be stated thus: *Verse* is used, normally, (*a*) to emphasize *passion*, in situation or in character. It accompanies a heightened emotional temperature, and often marks the sudden passage of a scene into this heightened mood. Thus, when the funeral procession, headed by the king and queen, approaches

the graveyard at Elsinore, Hamlet and Horatio break off their prose colloquy upon the dust of Alexander with:

> But soft! but soft! aside: here comes the king.
> (*Hamlet*, v. 1. 240.)

So, without any such outer provocation, Volumnia's exultation in her son suddenly breaks through the sober vesture of prose into lyric:

These are the ushers of Marcius: before him he carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears:

> Death, that dark spirit, in 's nervy arm doth lie,
> Which, being advanced, declines, and then men die.
> (*Coriolanus*, ii. 1. 171 *f.*)

(*b*) Though this principle is less consistently applied, verse is recognized as *nobler*, and therefore more appropriate to high-born persons; and as these, in Shakespeare, habitually play the leading part in the action, the framework of the plot and the crucial scenes are normally in verse. Verse may hence also mark the ceremonial or deferential language of subordinate or low-class characters. It may also be the medium of quite prosaic and matter-of-fact statements by noble persons, *e.g.* the archbishop's justification of the king's title (*Henry V*, i. 2. 32 *f.*), one of the flattest passages in Shakespeare.

Naturally these "principles" are not consistent, and frequently interfere with one another in practice. The one reflects the sensitive literary instinct of Shakespeare the poet, the other the aristocratic prejudices of Shakespeare the man.

4. In the absence of either of these motives for verse, prose is normal. Clearly this may arise from several distinct causes. Thus prose is the normal medium of (*a*) *low-class* characters: the *plebeians* at Rome (*Julius Cæsar*, *Coriolanus*); sailors (*Tempest*, *Hamlet*); Trinculo and Stephano (*Tempest*); the players and gravediggers (*Hamlet*); while in the immature Histories the citizens (*Richard III*) and the gardeners (*Richard II*) speak blank verse.

But when low-class characters have passion and pathos, like the murderers in *Macbeth*, they use verse. And note that Caliban, though treated as a slave by Prospero, speaks only in *verse*, a significant hint that this scion of the unspoilt new world is after all less ignoble than the dregs of civilization with whom he conspires.

(*b*) *Comic* situations and characters. This often concurs with (*a*) as in the porter (*Macbeth*), the gravediggers (*Hamlet*), Dogberry and Verges, and most of the *clowns* and *jesters*. But Falstaff, though

well-born, also speaks exclusively prose, except when he is parodying the "noble" manner of the stage-court (*1 Henry IV*, 4. 431).

(*c*) Sardonic, cynical, sarcastic characters, moods, and situations: *e.g.* Don John (*Much Ado*), Lucio (*Measure for Measure*), and the patrician Menenius (*Coriolanus*); so most of the bitter colloquies of Hamlet; while in his soliloquies bitterness is lifted into passion.

(*d*) Matter-of-fact, dryly "realistic," "prosaic" characters, moods, situations. Thus documents and letters, when quoted; *e.g.* Macbeth's (*Macbeth*, i. 5), Posthumus's (*Cymbeline*, iii. 2, iv. 4).

(*e*) Distinct from these is the use of prose for the incoherent language of *madness* (Lear, Edgar, Ophelia), frenzy, or mental paralysis.

5. But these various motives for prose or verse rarely occur singly. They are therefore often in conflict, and the decision in favor of one or the other is a means of delicate dramatic effect. Thus the most romantic and noble persons habitually speak prose with the Clown; and Falstaff's powerful magnetism creates prose wherever he moves. Hamlet speaks prose not only when he is sarcastic, but in his first cordial welcome to, or, later, in earnest expostulation with, the insignificant Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

6. We may now apply these general laws of Shakespearean prose and verse to the present play. Taking the characters separately:

Othello and Desdemona speak normally in verse. But Othello's mental "chaos" (iv. 1. 34*f.*, 180*f.*) is given in prose (4 *e*), and Desdemona, forcing her mood to playfulness in ii. 1. 122*f.*, speaks prose to Iago (5), while he, forcing his mood no less, in converse with his general's lady, speaks particularly stilted verse. Contrast her pleading colloquy with him in iv. 2. 110*f.*, where she is deeply in earnest and wholly herself. Othello's prose speech of directions to his wife (iv. 1. 7*f.*) may be meant to emphasize the rigid formality of the words. He no longer abuses her in public ("looks gentler than he did'), but he will not use the language of affection.

Iago, on the contrary, speaks naturally and normally *prose* (4 *c*, *d*). But throughout the play he is playing a part. Hence with Othello and Desdemona he habitually speaks verse (5); it is a sign of his conscious superiority to his credulous victim in the fourth act that, when Othello ceases to use verse (the prose of frenzy), Iago adopts with him, too, prose. His nominal subordination is cancelled. With superior persons in general (cf. the transition to verse when he addresses Montano in the brawl scene, ii. 3. 123), while in familiar talk with Cassio, in the same scene, and almost throughout with Roderigo, whom he despises, he talks prose. But this cynic has one subject of exaltation—his plot; hence the soliloquies which show him hatching the successive steps, or exulting in their success,

are in verse (i. 3. 389 *f.*; ii. 1. 294 *f.*; ii. 3. 50 and 342 *f.*; iii. 3. 320 *f.*, 389 *f.*; v. 1. 11 *f.*). With Roderigo, in the opening scene, he is not yet on familiar terms (cf. his "sir" and "you," afterwards always "thou"), and uses the more ceremonial language. In ii. 375 *f.* the exultation of having won the first decisive move in his game, reflected in the preceding and following soliloquies, still animates him ("does 't not go well?"). In v. 1. 1 *f.* his few lines of verse to Roderigo may be taken to mark the excitement of the critical moment ("it makes us or it mars us"). With Brabantio (i. 1. 80 *f.*) he is at first assuming the language of "terrible summons," and verse goes well with such un-Iagolike lyrical turns as "Awake; what ho!"—"Even now, now, very now"—"Arise, arise." In 108 *f.*, provoked to plain speaking, even with a magnifico of Venice, he reverts to his native prose. The matter of this passage and of 86 *f.* is much the same; but he was there professedly announcing a monstrous piece of news, here he is merely expostulating.

Roderigo's use of verse and prose is here sufficiently characterized.

Cassio, a naturally lyrical character, speaks verse habitually, except in familiar talk with Iago (ii. 3. 11 *f.*; iv. 1. 111 *f.*), in the drinking bout, and in the contemptuous dismissal of Bianca (*ib.* 152 *f.*). His prose in the anguished colloquy with Iago which follows (ii. 3. 260 *f.*) may be explained by the obsession of the prose-character of Iago (5). Had his cry, "O, I have lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal part of myself . . .," been uttered in soliloquy, it would probably have been in verse.

Emilia is seen only in company with persons with whom she is on deferential terms, her mistress, her master, and her husband. She falls into prose only once, in the cynical confession of her last confidential talk with Desdemona (iv. 3. 70 *f.*).

Bianca, by class and character, may be expected to speak prose (4 *a*). And this is the natural medium for her vulgar abuse of Cassio, iv. 1. 152 (4 *c*). Contrast with this her wistful pleading with him (iii. 4. 169 *f.*), appropriately in verse.

The Clown, as usual, speaks prose throughout (ii. 1.; iii. 4). And, as is equally usual, his mistress conforms to him. So Cassio, iii. 1. 22 *f.* Cf. Lear's prose speeches to his Fool in the midst of his passionate verse. The conventional condescension to the Fool, as to a quasi-equal, is thus effectually symbolized.

Sailor. The sailor who is ushered into the presence of the Venetian Senate (i. 3) would normally speak prose (4 *a*), but uses the more ceremonial language in deference (5).

Herald. The proclamation (ii. 2) is in prose (4 *d*).

The Duke and other Venetian patricians regularly use verse.

There is one exception only, the speeches in which Brabantio and the Duke turn from the affair of Othello's marriage to the proper and urgent business of the meeting (i. 3. 220–9). This may be best considered a case of 4 *d*. The transition from the high-flown "sentences" of the two grandees to the crying "facts" of the moment is effectively marked by the nakedly prosaic form of the speech in which the Duke complies with Brabantio's appeal:

"I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of state."

II. RHYME

At the date of Othello, Shakespeare had long ceased to admit rhyme simply as a beautiful variation on blank verse, as he does in the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* and in *Richard II*. But he had not yet come to confine it to the single function which it retains in the latest plays as the final couplet of a scene. In the present play it is used to heighten the effect of a string of sententious epigrams, as in the Duke's plea with Brabantio, and Brabantio's sarcastic retort (i. 3. 202–19). Similarly, it adds to the effect of artifice in Iago's "praise" of Desdemona, which comes from his brain "as birdlime does from frize" (ii. 1. 130 *f.*) and to occasional epigrammatic or sententious turns of his elsewhere (as iii. 3. 379–80). So in Othello's bitter epigram (v. 1. 35–6).

III. SCANSION

1. Elizabethan Pronunciation

(1) The current pronunciation of English in Elizabethan times differed widely from ours, and some of the differences affect the proper scansion of their verse. Thus (1) the *accent* sometimes fell on a different syllable: *e.g. promúlgate*—

I shall promulgate—I fetch my life and being (i. 2. 21).

sécure (iv 1. 72).

(2) Syllables now pronounced were *slurred*:

either at beginning of a line (i. 3. 277); but in full (v. 1. 129).

gentlemen (as an address)—

Kind gentlemen, let 's go see poor Cassio dress'd
(v. 1. 124).

So v. 1. 105, &c.,

but *gentleman* (three syllables) (v. 1. 115),
and *gentlemen* (three syllables) (v. 2. 195).

(3) Unemphatic pronouns and prepositions were often run together with adjacent words, forming a single syllable or its equivalent in time. Thus *of*, o' the: o' th sea (ii. 1. 54, &c.); *it*: not only in *'t is, 't was, on 't, with 't*, but as the object of verbs, *e. g.*—

Is not to leave 't undone, but to keep 't unknown (iii. 3. 204).

Sometimes the contracted and uncontracted forms occur in the same line:

Be not acknown on 't; I have use for it (iii. 3. 319).

(4) Conversely, syllables now slurred were pronounced: *búsiness* (three syllables) (i. 1. 154), but scanned as two syllables in i. 2. 90.

The most important example of this kind is the ending *-tion, -sion*, still often of two syllables. Its pronunciation and scansion as the equivalent of one syllable was, however, rapidly growing. It becomes steadily more frequent in Shakespeare himself as his career advances. At the date of *Othello* the fuller scansion is practically confined to the last foot of the line, *e.g.*:

But some uncleanly apprehen | sions | (iii. 3. 139).
Of law and course of direct ses | sion (i. 2. 86).
What shall I say? Where's satisfaction? (iii. 3. 401).

But the more archaic practice survives in

It were an honest act | ion | to say (ii. 3. 146).

The monosyllabic scansion is illustrated on every page, *e.g.*:

Keep leets and lawdays and | in sess | ion sit |
Put into circumscrip | tion and | confine (i. 2. 27),

and at the end of the line—

The wealthy curled darlings of our na | tion (i. 2. 68).
But this denoted a foregone conclu | sion (iii. 3. 428).

Similarly trisyllabic are *patience* (ii. 3. 376), *signior* (i. 3. 76; iv. 1. 233).

So in names: Cassio is usually scanned with two syllables, but can have three. Cf.:

How now, good Cassio, what 's the news with you?
(iii. 4. 109).

with

I will not leave him now till Cassio (iii. 4. 32).

Similarly, *Roderigo*, usually scanned as three syllables, has four in v. 2. 113.

2. Metre

1. The *norm* of English blank verse is a line of five metrical beats, separated in pronunciation by equal intervals of time.

The simplest representation of the norm is a verse in which the five beats fall upon five naturally-stressed syllables, the interval preceding each being filled by five syllables without stress.

Such verses occur occasionally in *Othello*; *e.g.*:

And I 'll devise a mean to draw the Moor (iii. 1. 39)

But the sequence of five metrical beats can be satisfied in many other ways, just as in music an infinity of tunes comply with a given rhythmic basis. And in verse, too, the beauty lies in the new groupings of sound discovered by the melodic instinct of the poet. Almost everything that enters into verse—number of syllables, number of stresses, degree of stress—is variable, provided the sense of metrical sequence is maintained. Thus a verse can have a stress on every syllable, or on no more than four, or even three, as in Shelley's

Úndulate with the úndulating tíde.

And it can have more than one unstressed syllable, not only, as here, between the stresses, but between the metrical beats.

2. But further, in the verse of Elizabethan drama, including Shakespeare, not only are the musical varieties played on the norm inexhaustible; the norm itself is often relaxed or suspended; in other words, an approach is made to the freedom of conversation; a natural, though not necessary (and in other schools of drama very unusual), characteristic of dramatic dialogue. Thus Shakespeare constantly admits verses both shorter and longer than the norm, and quite incapable of being reduced to it. It is certain that both dramatic realism and joy in the endless wealth of his musical invention had their part in determining the form and character of his verse. But the attempt to discriminate between the two formative influences is for the most part impracticable.

3. Normal Variations

(i) *Extra Syllables*

The normal "decasyllabic" verse was never, in English, strictly limited to ten syllables. At the outset, in Chaucer, the unstressed extra syllable at the end (feminine ending) even predominated, as it did in Italian, where the verse was thence more accurately called "eleven-syllabled" (endecasillabo). And beside that, Chaucer could put two unstressed syllables for one, and even drop the unstressed syllable of the first foot, producing verses of nine, and even twelve, syllables, as well as eleven and ten. In other words, the native tradition of a constant number of stresses survives in him along with the French tradition of a constant number of syllables; and each tradition supplements and modifies the other.

The first blank verse was severely decasyllabic, as in Surrey's *Æneid* and in *Gorboduc*. A great advance towards variety of verse music was made, when this rigor came to be relaxed, in two ways, (1) by the recovery of the Chaucerian unstressed final (eleventh) syllable, (2) by the reassertion of the native (and also classical) tradition of *equivalence*.

In its simplest form this appears in the substitution of a foot (x x —′) for (x —′): this is common everywhere in Shakespeare, but, like all other forms of metrical emancipation, gains ground as he advances. This is found (1) within a word or clause:

To take the saf | est occás | ion by the front (iii. 1. 52).
This fort | ificát | ion, gentlemen, shall we see 't? (iii. 2. 5).
Or sue to you and do | a pecu | liar profit (iii. 3. 79).

Similarly *unbonnéted* (i. 2. 23), *speculative* (i. 3. 271), &c.
(2) Before a strong pause, especially at the close of a speech:

Nor set down aught in mal | ice: then must you speak
(v. 2. 343).
Will shake this isl | and.
Mon. But is he often thus? (ii. 3. 133.)
And that would woo | her. Upon this hint I spake (i. 3. 166).

Even *two extra unstressed syllables* may thus be introduced. While the single unstressed final syllable (feminine ending) is found in all periods of Shakespeare's work, in all his later verse, his hypermetrical unstressed syllables are admitted, not only at the end, but within the line, usually before a pause (i) at the end:

Awáy, I sáy, go óut, and crý a mút || iny. (iii. 3, 156).
But with a knave of common hire, a gond || olier (i. 1. 126).

(ii) Within the line:

As thóu | dost rúm || inate, and gíve | thy wórst | of thóughts (iii. 3. 132).
And sóld | to sláv || ery, of mý | redemp | tion thénce. (i. 3, 138).

(ii) *Variation in the Pauses*

Language, in verse, is a succession of sounds which arrange themselves spontaneously for us in two distinct series of groups:

(1) *Sense* groups—clauses, sentences.

(2) *Metrical* groups—feet, verses.

The earliest English blank verse tended to make these groups coincide, and this tendency is still very perceptible in the early verse of Shakespeare, as in that of Marlowe.

But as he advances he tends more and more to make the groups not coincide but overlap. A growing proportion of sentences, and a smaller, but also growing, proportion of clauses, end within the verse, not at its close. An important case of the first is the speech-endings, which also, it is found, increasingly occur within the verse. While the "weak" or "light" ending, where a single clause flows over, without any grammatical pause, from one verse to the next, becomes the most striking characteristic of his later metrical style. It is traceable, but not yet largely developed, in *Othello*.

Light endings, *e.g.*:

It were an honest action to say
So to the Moor (ii. 3. 146).

That by your virtuous means I may again
Exist (iii. 4. 111).

(iii) *Variations in Stress*

The greatest source of flexibility in Elizabethan verse lies in the endless modulations of stress. While quantity, in classical measures, is either short or long, stress may have an indefinite number of subtle gradations, and, provided that the five beats of the normal verse are sustained, or not overpowered, any degree of stress is admissible in any place. Thus, while the average verse has four main stresses, a verse made of a succession of monosyllables may have eight or nine, as in Milton's:

Rocks, Caves, Lakes, Fens, Bogs, Dens, and shades of death.
(*Paradise Lost*, ii. 621).

And many verses of great beauty have three, *e.g.*:

And smóoth as monuméntal alabáster (v. 2. 5).

Hence we find in the same foot all gradations from (—′ —′) to (x x), for the metrical beat either concurs with the stress or takes its place. Even the inversion (— x) of the normal foot is not only admissible but of great beauty and constant occurrence, for the traversing of the normal rhythm, followed by its recovery, has the charm of a discord in music, immediately resolved. Whereas a succession of five such feet would wholly change the character of the line, compelling us to refer it to another norm. Such a verse, indeed, we have in Lear's:

Never, never, never, never, never.

But this is rather to be regarded as one of the countless dramatic departures from the norm than as a variation of it.

The possible variations in stress in a single Shakespearean verse are thus infinite, and could only be registered by a far finer notation than is at our disposal. It must suffice to give examples of the most marked and salient cases.

(1) Feet without stress. Especially common at the end of the line:

O insupportable! O heavy hour! (v. 2. 98).
Steep'd me in pov | erty to | the very lips (iv. 2. 50).
But to know so must be my bén | efit (iii. 4. 119).

(2) Feet with double stress. This is often combined with (i) forming a figure of great beauty, particularly common in Milton. *E.g.*:

Thy match was mortal to | him, and púre griéf (v. 2. 205)
Lead to the Sagittary the raísed seárch (i. 1. 159).

(3) Feet with *inverted* stress. This also forms with a following normal foot a figure of great beauty. In the first foot it is frequent in all periods. In the fourth foot, also, it is common in all periods of Shakespeare:

In this time of the night! | Bríng him | awáy! (i. 2. 94).

It is less common in the third:

Have I to-night | flústered | with flów | ing cups (ii. 3. 60).

So ii. 3. 64;

and rare in the second and fifth. A possible example is:

Stay ye, good gent | lemen. Look | you pále, | mistress?
(v. 1. 105)

4. Abnormal Variations

But many verses are found, as already stated (iii. 2), in all Shakespeare's mature work, which cannot be referred to the norm at all. The general explanation being that dramatic truth has got the better of metrical fidelity, and to that extent deflected the verse from the norm. Almost all these verses occur where continuity is interrupted by a strong pause; especially by the division between two speeches.

(i) The verse is abnormally long. We often find verses, nominally of six feet, forming two phrases of three feet each.

(*a*) Within the same speech:

Richer than all his tribe; | of one whose subdued eyes,
(v. 2. 348).

As my young mistress' dog. | Now, my sick fool Roderigo
(ii. 3. 53).

(*b*) Between two speeches:

Des. To-morrow dinner, then?
Oth. I shall not dine at home.

(ii) The verse is abnormally short. Here the two phrases form a line of less than normal length:

Must be to loathe her. O curse of marriage (iii. 3. 268).
More than their own. What then? how then? (iii. 3. 400).
Made to write "whore" upon? What committed? (iv. ii. 72).
That married with Othello. You, mistress (iv. ii. 90).

(iii) Such short lines, mostly of three, but also of two and of four, often occur alone.

(1) At the close of a speech; especially where the following speech is not directly in reply to the first:

[*Sailor*]. By Signior Angelo.
Duke [*to the Senators*]. How say you by this change? &c.

So Iago's comment, which Othello ignores, upon Othello's anguished outburst (iii. 3. 338 *f.*; i. 3. 17):

I am sorry to hear this (iii. 3. 344).

So iv. 32 and 64 below, 127, 172, 192, &c. Or Othello's slow, pondering

Certain, men should be what they seem (iii. 3. 128).

(2) Within the speech:

Oth. . . . the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have pass'd (i. 3. 131).

So Iago, prefacing his labored "praise" of Desdemona (ii. 1. 129) and his account of "Cassio's dream" (iii. 3. 415–19).

Moments of peculiar intensity may even produce complete dislocation of verse-structure, an occasional fragment of metre alone preserving the continuity of impression which would be broken by a definite descent to prose.

Thus the dialogue of Othello and Iago in iii. 3. 100 *f.*:

Iago. Indeed!
Oth. Indeed! ay, indeed: discern'st thou aught in that?
Is he not honest?
Iago. Honest, my lord!
Oth. Honest, ay, honest!
Iago. My lord, for aught I know.
Oth. What dost thou think?
Iago. Think, my lord?
Oth. Think, my lord! By heaven, he echoes me, &c.

There is similar dislocation in the crucial dialogue of Othello and Desdemona in iii. 4. 80 *f.*, and in the night brawl v. 1. 40 *f.*

No sharp line can be drawn in practice between the normal verses with two extra unstressed syllables, discussed in iii. 3 above, and the abnormal verses of six feet. Nor, again, can we wholly reject the view that in some of the "short" verses Shakespeare may have scanned a strongly-emphatic syllable as a foot. But since verses abound which cannot possibly be explained in this way, it is hazardous to rely upon it in any. As to the long verses, it must suffice to recognize that verses of twelve syllables may arise in two ways—by a complication of the normal verse, and by a definite infringement of the norm—and that in a large number of cases the two types thence arising can be distinguished.

APPENDIX II

THE TIME-RELATIONS

No reader or hearer who gives himself up to the overwhelming impression of the tragic action is likely to ask within what limits of time it is supposed to happen. But closer scrutiny shows, as has long been noticed, that this question cannot be confidently answered; not because it is left obscure, but because two wholly inconsistent answers can be gathered from the text. The latest and most critical discussion of the question is that of Dr. A. C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, Note I, upon which the following statement of the facts is based. Cf. also the account of previous discussions in Furness's Variorum edition of the play, p. 338 *f*.

Two sets of time indications may be found in the play. According to the first (which we may conveniently call A), Desdemona was murdered, at most a few days, and most probably on the night but one, after her arrival at Cyprus. According to the second, (B), an interval of some weeks intervened.

Taking A first. On the night following the arrival of Othello, Desdemona, and Cassio—in different ships—at Cyprus, occurs the brawl and Cassio's dismissal (ii. 3). He resolves to ask Desdemona's intercession "betimes in the morning" (ii. 3. 335).

In Act iii. 3 he does so, and Desdemona intercedes. In the same scene Iago begins to poison Othello's mind, with the result that, at the close, *i.e.* still on the day following the arrival, he orders the death of Cassio and prepares to murder Desdemona. The handkerchief has already been lost, and taken by Iago, and Iago has already insinuated that he has seen Cassio using it. In iii. 4 Othello inquires for the handkerchief, and after his departure Cassio is accosted by Bianca.

Act iv. 1 must follow at once, since Bianca is said to have had the handkerchief from Cassio "even now" (v. 155). She here invites him to supper *to-night*. In iv. 2 Iago persuades Roderigo to kill Cassio as he comes from supper with her *to-night*. In v. 1, Emilia rushes in with the news of this assault, immediately after the death of Desdemona.

From all this it appears hard to escape from the conclusion that only one day separates Desdemona's union with Othello and her murder.

On the other hand, a number of the passages (B) imply that a longer time—some weeks, at least—has elapsed. Thus Bianca has had time not only to make Cassio's acquaintance, but to pall on him and be neglected; she complains that he has been absent eight days; yet, according to ii. 1, Cassio only arrived at Cyprus on the morning of Othello's arrival, *i.e.* a day and a half, at most, before. Similarly, Iago speaks of having slept with Cassio and heard his profession of love to Desdemona. This is naturally a lie; but how can Othello accept it if Cassio had passed only a single night at Cyprus—the night of his own union with Desdemona—as A requires? And, above all, Othello repeatedly uses language which implies that he believes his wife's offence with Cassio to have been many times committed (v. 2. 210), and he bitterly reflects on his happiness in not knowing it—"I slept the next night well" (iii. 3. 340), when "the next night" after the first possible commission of the offence is still to come—the night in which he will put her to death? To these may be added the difficulty of explaining the recall of Othello —which no one in the play appears to think strange—on the day following his arrival to assume the command. Similarly, Roderigo, who at the close of Act i resolves to sell his land in order to woo Desdemona with the proceeds, has "almost spent" his money on the night following his arrival in Cyprus (ii. 3. 371). He certainly speaks as if he had been there some time.

It must suffice here to mention the three principal hypotheses which have been advanced to meet the case.

(1) Desdemona's offence is supposed to have occurred before marriage. This is favored by Iago's question, in iii. 3, as to Cassio's knowledge of the courtship, and by Othello's insult (iv. 2. 89), but is inconsistent with Othello's belief that she is false to *him*, and would greatly weaken the force of the whole. Nor does it relieve the time difficulties relating to Bianca and to the Venetian envoys.

(2) Our text was first published in 1622, six years after Shakespeare's death. It is suggested that it may have been curtailed for acting purposes, and that a scene may have been excised which introduced an interval of some weeks between the landing (ii. 1) and the brawl (ii. 3). This would remove most of the difficulties, but requires the excision of several passages which imply that the brawl happened on the night following the landing.

(3) It is supposed that Shakespeare deliberately admitted two scales of time (called by "Christopher North," who first suggested this, "short time" and "long time"), as if thus gaining at once the effect of the terrific swiftness of the main action and yet retaining the rationality of the minor circumstances. The example of the

Merchant of Venice, where time at Venice and at Belmont do not tally, prevents our absolutely rejecting this possibility. It could be only an extension of the ideal treatment of time (and space) presupposed in the whole Elizabethan drama to imagine a different time-rate in different parts of the action. But the trouble here is that the main action itself cannot have this "terrific swiftness" without becoming irrational, and therefore at bottom unintelligible.

Perhaps, in the last resort, we may find a clue in this very fact, and recognize that, as in genius itself there is something which our rationality sees as unreason, so the overwhelming imaginative effect of a supreme poem may be brought about by processes which, when we try to analyze them, fall apart into discrepant elements, like the divergent visual images which the stereoscope blends into one harmonious vision. Whether carelessness, as modern criticism tends to believe, or profound calculation, as North and his generation held, was the source of these and similar discrepancies, the central and salient fact for us is that when *Othello* is read or seen with an imagination fully kindled and alert, these discrepancies are not felt, because such an imagination becomes absorbed and possessed by the overpowering tragic situation itself, to the eternal truth of which time and place are at the bottom irrelevant. The cool analytic scrutiny which discovers them sees justly, but it is not to this temper that poetry is addressed or to which it discloses its inmost secrets.

APPENDIX III

SHAKESPEARE'S STAGE IN ITS BEARING UPON HIS DRAMA

1. The structure and arrangement of the Elizabethan theater are still under discussion, and many points of detail remain unsettled. The last twenty years have produced a very extensive and highly technical literature on the subject, chiefly in England, America, and Germany. It is based especially on the new evidence derived from (1) the original stage directions, and (2) contemporary illustrations and descriptions. The following summary gives the conclusions which at present appear most reasonable, neglecting much speculative matter of great interest.

2. When Shakespeare arrived in London, soon after 1585, theatrical exhibitions were given there in (1) public theaters, (2) private theaters, (3) the halls of the royal palaces, and of the Inns of Court.

Of the "public" theaters there were at least three: The Theater, the Curtain, both in Shoreditch, and Newington Butts on the Bankside or Southwark shore. About 1587, the Rose, also on the Bankside, was added. All these were occasionally used by Shakespeare's company before 1599, when their headquarters became the newly built Globe, likewise on the Bankside. Of the "private" theaters the principal, and the oldest, was the Blackfriars, on the site of the present *Times* office. It was also the property of the company in which Shakespeare acquired a share, but being let out during practically his whole career, does not count in the present connection. At court, on the other hand, his company played repeatedly. But his plays were written for the "public" theater, and this alone had influence upon his stage-craft.

3. The "public" theater differed from the other two types chiefly in being (1) dependent on daylight, (2) open overhead, and (3) partially seatless; and from the court-stages also, in (4) not using painted scenes. While they, again, had the rectangular form, the typical "public" theater was a round or octagonal edifice, modelled partly on the inn-yards where companies of players had been accustomed to perform, prior to the inhibition of 1574, on movable stages;

partly on the arenas used for bear-baiting and cock-fighting—sports still carried on in the theaters, and in part dictating their arrangements.

The circular inner area, known thence as the cock-pit, or pit, had accordingly no seats; admission to it cost one penny (6*d.* in modern money), and the standing spectators were known as the "groundlings." More expensive places (up to 2*s.* 6*d.*) with seats, were provided in tiers of galleries which ran round the area, one above the other, as in modern theaters; the uppermost being covered with a thatched roof.

4. The Stage (using the term to describe the entire scenic apparatus of the theater) included (1) the *outer stage*, a rectangular platform (as much as 42 feet wide in the largest examples) projecting into the circular area, from the back wall, and thus surrounded by "groundlings" on three sides. Above it were a thatched roof and hangings, but no side or front curtains. In the floor was a trap-door by which ghosts and others ascended or descended. At the back were (2) two projecting wings, each with a door opening obliquely on to the stage, the *recess* between them, of uncertain shape and extent, forming a kind of inner stage. Above this was (3) an upper room or rooms, which included the actors' "tiring-house," with a window or windows opening on (4) a *balcony* or gallery, from which was hung (5) a *curtain*, by means of which the inner recess could be concealed or disclosed.

5. The most important divergence of this type of structure from that of our theaters is in the relation between the outer stage and the auditorium. In the modern theater the play is treated as a picture, framed in the proscenium arch, seen by the audience like any other picture from the front only, and shut off from their view at any desired moment by letting the curtain fall. An immediate consequence of this was that a scene (or act) could terminate only in one of two ways. Either the persons concerned in it walked, or were carried, off the stage; or a change of place and circumstances was *supposed* without their leaving it. Both these methods were used. The first was necessary only at the close of the play. For this reason an Elizabethan play rarely ends on a *climax*, such as the close of Ibsen's *Ghosts;* the overpowering effect of which would be gravely diminished, if instead of the curtain falling upon Osvald's helpless cry for "the sun," he and his mother had to walk off the stage. Marlowe's *Faustus* ends with a real climax, because the catastrophe *ipso facto* leaves the stage clear. But the close of even the most overwhelming final scenes of Shakespeare is relatively

quiet, or even, as in *Macbeth*, a little tame. The concluding lines often provide a motive for the (compulsory) clearing of the stage.

In the *Tragedies*, the dead body of the hero has usually to be borne ceremoniously away, followed by the rest; so Aufidius in *Coriolanus:* "Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers; I'll be one." Similarly in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. In *Othello*, Desdemona's bed was apparently in the curtained recess, and at the close the curtains were drawn upon the two bodies, instead of their being as usual borne away.

The close of the *Histories* often resembles the dispersing of an informal council after a declaration of policy by the principal person; thus *Richard II* closes with Bolingbroke's announcement of the penance he proposes to pay for Richard's death; *Henry IV* with his orders for the campaign against Northumberland and Glendower; *King John* with Falconbridge's great assertion of English patriotism.

In the *Comedies*, the leading persons will often withdraw to explain to one another at leisure what the audience already knows (*Winter's Tale*, *Tempest*, *Merchant of Venice*), or to carry out the wedding rites (*As You Like It*, *Midsummer-Night's Dream*); or they strike up a measure and thus (as in *Much Ado*) naturally dance off the stage. Sometimes the chief persons have withdrawn before the close, leaving some minor character—Puck (*Midsummer-Night's Dream*) or the Clown (*Twelfth Night*)—to wind up the whole with a snatch of song, and then retire himself.

6. But the most important result of the exposed stage was that it placed strict limits upon dramatic illusion, and thus compelled the resort, for most purposes, to conventions resting on symbolism, suggestion, or make-believe. It was only in dress that anything like simulation could be attempted; and here the Elizabethan companies, as is well known, were lavish in the extreme. Painted scenes, on the other hand, even had they been available, would have been idle or worse, when perhaps a third of the audience would see, behind the actors, not the scenes but the people in the opposite gallery, or the gallants seated on the stage. Especially where complex and crowded actions were introduced, the most beggarly symbolic suggestion was cheerfully accepted. Jonson, in the spirit of classicist realism, would have tabooed all such intractable matter; and he scoffed, in his famous Prologue, at the "three rusty swords" whose clashing had to do duty for "York and Lancaster's long jars." Shakespeare's realism was never of this literal kind, but in bringing Agincourt upon the stage of the newly built Globe in the following year (1599) he showed himself so far sensitive to criticisms of this type that he expressly appealed to the audience's imagination—

"eke out our imperfections with your thoughts"—consenting, moreover, to assist them by the splendid descriptive passages interposed between the Acts.

It is probable that the Elizabethan popular audience did not need any such appeal. It had no experience of elaborate realism on the stage; the rude movable stages on which the earliest dramas had been played compelled an ideal treatment of *space* and a symbolic treatment of *properties;* and this tradition, though slowly giving way, was still paramount throughout Shakespeare's career. Thus every audience accepted as a matter of course (1) the representation of *distant* things or places simultaneously on the stage. Sidney, in 1580, had ridiculed the Romantic plays of his time with "Asia of one side and Africa of the other," indicated by labels. But Shakespeare in 1593–4 could still represent the tents of Richard III and Richmond within a few yards of one another, and the Ghosts speaking alternately to each. Every audience accepted (2) the presence on the stage, in full view of the audience, of accessories irrelevant to the scene in course of performance. A property requisite for one set of scenes, but out of place in another, could be simply ignored while the latter were in progress; just as the modern audience sees but never reckons as scenery, the footlights and the prompter's box. Large, movable objects, such as beds or chairs, were no doubt often brought in when needed; but no one was disturbed if they remained during an intervening scene in which they were out of place. And "properties either difficult to move, like a well, or so small as to be unobtrusive, were habitually left on the stage as long as they were wanted, whatever scenes intervened" (Reynolds).

Thus in Jonson's *The Case is Altered* (an early play, not yet reflecting his characteristic technique), Jaques, in iii. 2, hides his gold in the earth and covers it with a heap of dung to avoid suspicion. In iv. 4, he removes the dung to assure himself that the gold is still there. The intervening scenes represent rooms in Ferneze's palace, and Juniper's shop; but the heap of dung doubtless remained on the stage all the time. Similarly in Peele's *David and Bethsabe*, the spring in which Bethsabe bathes; and in his *Old Wives' Tale*, a "study" and a "cross," which belong to unconnected parts of the action.

It follows from this that the *supposed locality of a scene could be changed* without any change in the properties on the stage, or even of the persons. What happened was merely that some properties which previously had no dramatic relevance, suddenly acquired it, and *vice versa;* that a tree, for instance, hitherto only a stage prop-

erty out of use, became a *tree* and signified probably, a wood. The change of scene may take place without any break in the dialogue, and be marked only by the occurrence of allusions of a different tenor.

Thus in *Doctor Faustus*, at v. 1106 *f.*, Faustus is in "a fair and pleasant green," on his way from the Emperor's Court to Wittenberg; at v. 1143 *f.*, he is back in his house there. In *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 4. 5, Romeo and his friends are at first in the street; at i. 4, 114, according to the Folio, "they march about the stage and servingmen come forth with their napkins"; in other words, we are now in Capulet's hall, and Capulet presently enters, meeting his guests. This is conventionalized in modern editions.

7. The Inner Stage.—An audience for which the limitations of the actual stage meant so little, might be expected to dispense readily with the concessions to realism implied in providing an actual inner chamber for scenes performed "within," and an actual gallery for those performed "aloft." And the importance and number of the former class of scenes has, in fact, been greatly exaggerated.

Applying modern usages to the semi-medieval Elizabethan stage, Brandl (*Einleitung* to his revised edition of Schlegel's translation) and Brodmeier (Dissertation on the Stage-conditions of the Elizabethan Drama), put forward the theory of the "alternative" scene; according to which the inner and the outer stage were used "alternately," a recurring scene, with elaborate properties, being arranged in the former, and merely curtained off while intervening scenes were played on the outer, or main stage. But while this theory is plausible, as applied to some of Shakespeare's plays (*e. g.* the intricate transitions between rooms at Belmont and piazzas at Venice, in the *Merchant*), it breaks down in others (*e. g. Cymbeline*, ii. 2, 3; *Richard II*, i. 3, 4), and especially in many plays by other dramatists.

It is probable that the use of the "inner stage" was in general restricted to two classes of scene: (1) where persons "within" formed an integral though subordinate part of a scene of which the main issue was decided on the outer stage; as with the play-scene in *Hamlet*, or where Ferdinand and Miranda are discovered playing chess in *The Tempest;* (2) where a scene, though engaging the whole interest, is supposed to occur in an inner chamber. Thus Desdemona's chamber, Prospero's cell, Timon's cave, Lear's hovel, the Capulets' tomb.

8. The Balcony.—There is less doubt about the use of the balcony or gallery. This was in fact an extremely favorite resource, and its existence in part explains the abundance of serenade, rope-ladder, and other upper-story scenes in Elizabethan drama.

From the balcony, or the window above it, Juliet discoursed with Romeo, and Sylvia with Proteus (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. 2); Richard III addressed the London citizens, and the citizen of Angers the rival Kings. From the window the Pedant in *Taming of the Shrew*, v. 1, hails Petruchio and Grumio below; and Squire Tub, in Jonson's *Tale of a Tub*, i. 1, puts out his head in answer to the summons of Parson Hugh. But whole scenes were also, it is probable, occasionally enacted in this upper room. This is the most natural interpretation of the scenes in Juliet's chamber (iv. 3, 5). On the other hand, though the Senators in *Titus Andronicus*, i. 1, "go up into the Senate House," it is probable that the debate later in the scene, on the main stage, is intended to be in the Senate House by the convention described in 6.

For further reference the following among others may be mentioned:—

G. F. Reynolds, *Some Principles of Elizabethan Staging* (*Modern Philology*, II. iii.); A. Brandl, *Introduction* to his edition of Schlegel's translation of Shakespeare; V. E. Albright, *The Shakespearian Stage* (New York); W. Archer, *The Elizabethan Stage* (*Quarterly Review* 1908); W. J. Lawrence, *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (1st and 2d series); D. Figgis, *Shakespeare, a Study*.

From one or other of these, many of the above examples have been taken.

C. H. H.

GLOSSARY

abused (iii. 3. 200), deceived.
addition (iii. 4. 194), honor; (iv. 2. 163, &c.), title.
advantage (iii. 3. 212), favorable opportunity.
affined (i. 1. 39), bound in obligation.
affinity (iii. 1. 49), family relationship.
agnize (i. 3. 232), acknowledge.
aim (i. 3. 6), conjecture, guess.
Almain (ii. 3. 86), German.
ancient (i. 1. 33. and *passim*), a phonetic corruption for ensign.
antres (i. 3. 140), caverns.
approve (ii. 3. 316), find by trial, prove; cf. ii. 3. 211. Also to accept, credit (as likely to be found true if tried, like L. *probabilis*) (i. 3. 11).
aspic (iii. 3. 450), asp.
attack (i. 2. 77), arrest.

be-lee'd (i. 1. 30), left in the lee, passed by like a ship becalmed.
besort (i. 3. 239), company.
bob (v. 1. 16), procure cunningly in order to defraud.
by (i. 3. 17), about, concerning. Cf. Abbott, § 145.

callet (iv. 2. 121), cant term for "mistress."
capable (iii. 3. 458), comprehensive.
carack (i. 2. 50), merchant-vessel (and so likely to have a rich cargo).
cast (i. 1. 150; ii. 3. 14. 273), cast off, dismiss.
censure (ii. 3. 193, &c.), judgment.
challenge (ii. 1. 213), claim.
chamberer (iii. 3. 265), drawing-room knight, courtier.
chrysolite (v. 2. 145), a green jewel.
civil (iv. 1. 65), citizen (as adjective).
clip (iii. 3. 464), embrace.
cog (iv. 2. 132), cheat.
collied (ii. 3. 206), obscured.
commoner (iv. 2. 73), prostitute.
condition (ii. 1. 255; iv. 1. 204), disposition, character.
consul (i. 1. 25; 2. 43), counsellor (in the Grand Council of Venice).
continuate (iii. 4. 178), uninterrupted.
convinced (iv. 1. 28), overcome.
corrigible (i. 3. 329), corrective.
counter-caster (i. 1. 31), clerk (one who uses counters in book-keeping).
country (adj.) (iii. 3. 201, 237), native.

daff (iv. 2. 176), put off.
dear (i. 3. 85), intense, zealous, extreme.
demerit (i. 2. 22), merit. Minsheu Dict., 1621: *demerite*, a desert.
dilate (i. 3. 153), relate at large. Cf. *Com. Err.* (i. 1. 123), "dilate at full what hath befallen of them."
dispose (i. 3. 403), disposition.
doubt (iii. 3. 19), suspect.

ecstasy (iv. 1. 80), madness; hence, a fit.
engines (iv. 2. 221), plots.
ensteeped (ii. 1. 70), immersed deep in water.
escape (i. 3. 197), escapade.

favour (ii. 1. 232), countenance.
fineless (iii. 3. 173), endless, infinite.
fitchew (iv. 1. 150), a pole-cat.

fond (i. 3. 320), foolish.
fop (iv. 2. 198), make a fool of.
fordo (v. 1. 129), undo, ruin.
fraught (iii. 3. 449), burden.
free (ii. 3, 343), frank, sincere. So *freely* (ii. 3. 324, &c.).
frize (ii. 1. 127), coarse woollen stuff.
from (i. 1. 132), contrary to.
front (i. 3. 80; iii. 1. 52), forehead.

gender (iv. 2. 62), engender, multiply.
generous (iii. 3. 280), noble, well-born.
gennets (i. 1. 114), Moorish horses.
germans (i. 1. 114), relatives.
grange (i. 1. 107), an outlying granary.
grise (i. 3. 200), flight of steps.
guardage (i. 2. 70), guarded safety.

happily (iii. 3. 238), haply.

idle (i. 3. 140), unoccupied, empty.
import (iii. 3. 317), importance.
incontinent (iv. 3. 12), immediately.
ingener (ii. 1. 65), inventor, contriver.
injointed (i. 3. 35), joined.
intentively (i. 3. 155), with mind bent upon the matter; attentively.

jump (i. 3. 5), agree.

lay (ii. 3. 330), wager.
liberal (ii. 1. 165), licentious.

mammering (iii. 3. 70), hesitating.
manure (i. 3. 328), till, cultivate.
mazzard (ii. 3. 156), head.
mere (ii. 2. 3), total.
moe (iv. 3. 57), more (orig. neuter form of the comparative, used of numbers).
mortal (ii. 1. 72), deadly, destructive.
motion (i. 2. 76), apprehension; (i. 3. 95, 335), impulse.

night-gown (iv. 3. 34), a loose cloak or dressing-gown, which could be worn out of doors.
nonsuits (i. 1. 16), dismisses as having no case, the most humiliating form of defeat in the law courts.
notorious (iv. 2. 140; v. 2. 239), egregious.

opinion (ii. 3. 195), reputation.
opposite (i. 2. 67), averse, opposed.
owe (i. 1. 66, &c.), own, possess.

paragon (ii. 1. 62), serve as a pattern for, excel.
perdition (ii. 2. 3), loss, destruction.
perdurable (i. 3. 343), enduring.
pioner (iii. 3. 346), miner.
pliant (i. 3. 151) (of time), disposable, free.
poise (iii. 3. 82), weight.
portance (i. 3. 139), bearing.
potting (ii. 3. 79), drinking.
pottle-deep (ii. 3. 56), to the bottom of the measure (of two quarts).
practice (v. 2. 292), insidious plot.
pregnant (ii. 1. 239), evident.
probal (ii. 3. 344), plausible.
proper (i. 3. 69, 265), own, personal.
proper (iv. 3. 35), handsome.

quarter (ii. 3. 180), concord.
quat (v. 1. 11), pimple.
quillet (iii. 1. 25), quibble.
quirks (ii. 1. 63), flourishes.

raise (i. 1. 159, &c.), rouse, call up, awaken.
recognizance (v. 2. 214), token.
remorse (iii. 3. 369), pity.
repeal (ii. 3. 363), recall.
rheum (iii. 4. 51), discharge from eyes or nose.
round (i. 3. 90), straightforward, direct.
rouse (ii. 3. 67), a large draught, a bumper.

salt (ii. 1. 244), licentious.
sect (i. 3. 336), cutting, sprout.
seel (i. 3. 270), blind, blindfold (in falconry).
sentence (i. 3. 199), a gnomic or proverbial saying. Hence "sententious."
sequent (i. 2. 41), successive.
siege (i. 2. 22) [L. *sedes*], place, rank; from the *seats* set in order of precedence at table.
signiory (i. 2. 18), the Grand Council of Venice.
skillet (i. 3. 273), kettle.

slipper (ii. 1. 246), slippery, crafty.
slubber (i. 3. 227), soil, dim.
splinter (ii. 3. 329), put between splints.
stomach (v. 2. 75), appetite.

theoric (i. 1. 24), theoretical knowledge.
traverse (i. 3. 379), a military command, step out, go.

undertaker (iv. 1. 223), one who represents or takes the part of another.
use (iv. 1. 285; iv. 3. 105), custom, habit.
usurped (i. 3. 345), false.

vicious (iii. 3. 145), erroneous.

yerk'd (i. 2. 5), struck, stabbed. A phonetic variant for "jerked."

THE ARDEN SHAKESPEARE

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THE TRAGEDY *of* HAMLET PRINCE OF DENMARK

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Printed in the United States of America

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INTRODUCTION

1. LITERARY HISTORY OF THE PLAY

The early history of *Hamlet* affords one of the most difficult problems with which Shakespearean scholarship has to deal. Three printed versions of the text have come down to us. These present remarkable variations from one another, and one of them in particular, the earliest, appears to be fundamentally different from the other two. The most probable explanation is that the play underwent a process of revision after it was originally written and acted. If, then, we could determine the exact relation in which the three forms stand to one another, we should learn a good deal about Shakespeare's dramatic method as shown in the deliberate modification of his first ideas. Unfortunately this is not so easy. Scholars still disagree hopelessly as to the exact nature of the earliest version; and the whole question is complicated by the probable existence of a pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet*, which may have had a considerable influence upon the later play. For the present, one must be content to bring together the facts, to indicate the conditions of the problem, and to suggest the most likely hypothesis for its solution.

The Registers of the Stationers' Company for 1602, amongst other entries of books "allowed to be printed," contain the following:

xxvj^to^ Julij

James Robertes. Entered for his copie vnder the handes of master **Pasfield** and master **Waterson** warden, A booke called "*the Revenge of HAMLETT Prince* [*of*] *Denmarke*" *as y^t^ was latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberleyne his seruantes.* . . vjd.

No edition is known to have been published in 1602, but in 1603 appeared the perplexing First Quarto. In the interval the Lord Chamberlain's players had passed under the direct patronage of James the First, and they are therefore entitled "his Highness' servants" upon the title-page, which runs:

THE | Tragicall Hiſtorie of | HAMLET | *Prince of Denmarke* | By William Shakeſpeare. | As it hath beene diverſe times acted by his Highneſſe ſer- | vants in the Cittie of London: as alſo in the two V- | niverſities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elſe-where | [*Vignette*] | At London printed for N. L. and Iohn Trundell. | 1603.

James Roberts' name is not here mentioned; but he may have printed the book for the publisher N[icholas] L[ing], whose device forms the vignette. At any rate he appears to have done this in the case of the Second Quarto, which was published in 1604, with the following title-page:

THE | Tragicall Hiſtorie of | HAMLET, | *Prince of Denmarke.* | By William Shakeſpeare. | Newly imprinted and enlarged to almoſt as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect | Coppie | [*Vignette*] | *AT LONDON*, | Printed by I. R. for N. L. and are to be ſold at his ſhoppe vnder Saint Dunſton's Church in | Fleet ſtreet. 1604.

The First Quarto stands by itself; the later Quartos follow the second; but an independent text is afforded by the First Folio edition of the collected plays issued in 1623, after Shakespeare's death. Here *Hamlet* is no longer entitled a Tragical History, but a Tragedy. In the order of the plays it follows *Julius Cæsar* and *Macbeth*, and immediately precedes *King Lear*.

The modern text of *Hamlet* is based upon a combination of the Second Quarto and the First Folio, and it is therefore necessary briefly to compare the two with each other, and both with the First Quarto.

The editors of the First Folio claim to have provided carefully corrected texts of all plays whereof "stolen and surreptitious copies" had been in circulation before. To a certain extent this is justified as to *Hamlet*. The Second Quarto is very poorly printed; it is disfigured by obvious mistakes and confusions;[1] the punctuation is chaotic. The First Folio is not faultless in these respects, but it is a great improvement. Many of the errors of the Quarto have been avoided, and the minor details of press-work, the commas and colons, have been carefully attended to. Moreover, the Folio adds a few passages which are not found in the Quarto.[2] But these advantages are more than compensated

[1] See notes on i. 3. 74, 76; i. 4. 36; i. 5. 56; ii. 2. 73; iii. 2. 373; iii. 4. 169; iv. 7. 22; v. 2. 283, etc.

[2] See notes on ii. 2. 215, 244, 335, 352; iii. 2. 277; iv. 2. 32; iv. 5. 161; v. 1. 37, 115; v. 2. 68; together with Appendix D and Furnivall's introduction to Grigg's facsimile of Q 2.

for by considerable and important omissions, especially in the soliloquies.[1] The Second Quarto was evidently printed from a longer and more complete manuscript than the Folio, and where divergencies of reading occur, and the compositor is not at fault, it generally provides the better sense.[2]

The relation of the First Quarto to the later versions is a much more difficult matter. Most critics are agreed that, whatever may have been the case with the Second Quarto, the First, like the First Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet*, was fairly to be put down by the editors of the 1623 Folio as a "stolen and surreptitious copy." The publication of it was doubtless due rather to the enterprise of a piratical bookseller than to the wish of Shakespeare or his company. And in all probability it was founded upon hasty notes, taken in shorthand or otherwise, by some agent of this bookseller's during a performance at the theatre. This would account for the extreme shortness of the text, for its mutilated character, for the obvious gaps in the sense, for the number of imperfect and wrongly arranged lines, and of misheard words and phrases. Some scholars have held that the note-taker's materials were pieced out, either from the prompter's copy or the actors' parts, or by the pen of a hack poet. But if this had been the case to any considerable extent, the defects would hardly have been so glaring as they are. I do not think that more has been done than just to transcribe the careless and incomplete notes, and perhaps here and there to fill up a line by the addition of a few words. In any case the printed copy is very far from reproducing the dialogue of the play as it was presented upon the stage.

But now comes the point that is still the subject of the keenest controversy. Supposing that this dialogue had been reproduced with absolute accuracy, would the result have closely resembled the Second Quarto? In other words, was the play as acted when the note-taker went to the theatre practically identical with the play as acted and printed in 1604, or did it undergo alteration and revision in the interval? Scholars of great authority have declared on both sides, but the weight of evidence appears to me to be in favor of the theory that there was an extensive and important revision. The order of the scenes in the First Quarto is not quite

[1] See notes on i. 1. 108; i. 2. 58; i. 4. 18, 75; iii. 4. 168; iv. 4. 9; iv. 7. 69; v. 2. 203.

[2] See notes on i. 1. 65, 163; i. 2. 129, 248; ii. 1. 39; ii. 2. 52, 442, 580; iv. 5. 145; v. 1. 255, 269, etc. Sometimes F 1 substitutes a less archaic or unusual word for that in Q 2; now and then it may contain a finishing touch (*e.g.* *inurned* for *interred* in i. 4. 49).

that of the Second. Some of the characters, notably that of Gertrude, are differently conceived. The great soliloquies are almost entirely omitted; the dialogue is less subtle and elaborate, as might well be the case in a first sketch. There are passages which make very good sense and not bad poetry as they stand, where there is no sign that the reporter has gone far wrong, but which have apparently been rewritten and improved throughout for the Second Quarto. And finally, the names of the characters are not quite the same in the two versions: The Polonius and Reynaldo of the Second Quarto replace the Corambis and Montano of the First. In all probability, then, the First Quarto is an exceedingly corrupt text of a first sketch of *Hamlet;* the Second Quarto represents much more accurately a revised form of the same play.

It has been asked, Was this first sketch of *Hamlet* Shakespeare's throughout, or did it contain parts by an earlier writer, which in the revision Shakespeare cut out and replaced by his own work? One cannot suppose Shakespeare's masterpiece of tragedy to have been written in the sixteenth century; but there certainly was a play of *Hamlet* in existence as early as 1589 or possibly 1587. There are several allusions to this play in contemporary literature,[1] notably in Nashe's prefatory epistle to Greene's *Menaphon.* And in the diary of Henslowe, the manager, there is a record of a performance of it, not as a "new enterlude," on June 9, 1594. It was acted by the Lord Chamberlain's company, who were then playing for about ten days under Henslowe's management at Newington Butts. It has been suggested with some plausibility that this early *Hamlet* was written by Thomas Kyd, author of *The Spanish Tragedy.*

In any case, seeing that it had come into the hands of the Lord Chamberlain's company by 1594, there can be little doubt that Shakespeare used it as a starting-point, when he wrote his own play on the same subject for the same company. Probably he kept the framework of the plot, including the ghost, the play within a play, and the somewhat sanguinary final scene. Shakespeare was never careful to invent his own plots; his art lay rather in using old bottles to contain his quite new wine. But the dialogue, the characters, the psychological motive — these are his and his alone, and it is in these that the greatness of *Hamlet* lies. The important question is whether this process of adaptation was complete in the first sketch, or whether fragments of the earlier author's writing are still embedded in the text. The Clarendon Press editors adopt the second alternative. They believe

[1] For early allusions to the pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet*, see Appendix B.

that the First Quarto represents Shakespeare's remodeling of an old play "after it had been retouched by him to a certain extent, but before his alterations were complete," and they go on to say: "In the earlier form it appears to us that Shakespeare's modification of the play had not gone much beyond the second act." I am obliged to dissent entirely from this theory. It ascribes a great deal too much to the older writer. Tentative as the First Quarto is, it still contains the essential outlines of the perfected play; and if the bulk of it is not Shakespeare's, then there was another Elizabethan dramatist as great as Shakespeare himself, who has left no other sign of his existence. If there are any traces of the older play left in the first sketch, I am pretty sure they are very slight, and I rather think they are retained in the revised version also.

There is another source from which it has been suggested that we may perhaps get some idea of the pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet*. This is the German version, known as *Der bestrafte Brudermord*, or *Fratricide Punished*. The existing text dates only from 1710, but in the opinion of some scholars it is a degenerate form of a play written not later than 1589.[1] Several companies of English actors visited Germany at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, and there is a record of a performance of *Hamlet, a Prince in Dennemarck* by "the English actors" at the court of Dresden in 1626. It is not at all unlikely that the MS. of an early *Hamlet*, by Kyd or another, was carried by Leicester's players to Denmark in 1585, and thence to Saxony in 1586. Or it may have been written, appropriately enough, for performance in Denmark. Three of these players, Will (Kempe?), George Bryan, and Thomas Pope, had joined the Chamberlain's (then Lord Strange's) company by 1593, and thus the play would have come into Shakespeare's hands.

Fratricide Punished is very short — a mere dramatic sketch; but it contains the outlines of *Hamlet*, without the Shakespearean psychology or the Shakespearean style. These are replaced by coarse humor and a good deal of bathos and commonplace. Something of this may be due to German influence; but on the whole the difference is just what one would expect to find between a popular drama of 1585 and a Shakespearean drama based upon it. Some of the *dramatis personæ* bear other names than those in *Hamlet*, and it is noteworthy that Polonius is represented by Corambus. It must be remembered, however, that the German play

[1] See Appendix C.

cannot be proved to date from the sixteenth century. The MS. belongs to the eighteenth, and the resemblances to *Hamlet* may be due to the fact that the author was simply adapting a copy of the First Quarto that had drifted to Germany.

2. DATE OF COMPOSITION

Hamlet, then, is probably based upon an older play of the crude "revenge" type. To what dates are we to ascribe the various stages of Shakespeare's treatment of the theme? The revised version may fairly be put at about 1603–1604, between the date of the publication of the Second Quarto and the visit of the surreptitious note-taker to the theatre. The first sketch cannot be later than the entry in the Stationers' Registers for July 26, 1602. And it cannot well be earlier than 1598, as it is not mentioned in the list of Shakespeare's plays given by Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia* of that year. Internal evidence appears to fix 1601 as the most likely date. We know from the title-page of the First Quarto that it was acted when Shakespeare and his fellows were touring in the provinces; and this being so, we may fairly find in what is said about the players in Act ii, scene 2 an allusion to the fortunes of the Chamberlain's company. Two reasons are there given for the "traveling" of the actors: one, an "inhibition," due to a "late innovation"; the other, the popularity of a rival company, an "eyrie of children," who had "be-rattled the common stages." [1] No other year fits these references so well as 1601. The Chamberlain's company were "inhibited" from giving their customary court performances at the Christmas season of that year, on account of their connection with Essex's attempt at political "innovation." We know that they "traveled," for they are found at Aberdeen in October, and there are also traces of a possible visit to Cambridge at about this time. In 1601, moreover, Jonson's satirical plays, in which he attacked most of the rival dramatists, were being produced by the Chapel children at Blackfriars. This sufficiently explains the allusion to the "eyrie of children." It is also worth noting that at this period William Kempe, the famous actor of clowns, was not a member of the Chamberlain's company. He left them in 1599, and probably returned in 1602. This explains why the hit at him in iii. 2. 41 is so much more elaborate in the First than in the Second Quarto.[2] There is yet one more consideration which points to this date of

[1] On these allusions see Appendix D.
[2] See note *ad loc.*

1601. It brings the play into close connection with *Julius Cæsar* and *Macbeth*, both of which belong to just this period, the period of the earliest tragedies. And it is noteworthy that the same dramatic motive is used in all three plays — the contrast, namely, between the active and the speculative temperament.[1]

I may sum up this discussion by a brief sketch of what I conceive to have taken place. I may add that for this I am largely indebted to the suggestive work of Mr. Fleay. I think, then, that ever since 1594 the Chamberlain's company had possessed the manuscript of the old "revenge" play of *Hamlet*. While they were on tour in 1601, Shakespeare used this as a basis for a hasty drama on the same subject. When they returned to London in 1602 they continued to perform this, and it was pirated by James Roberts. In the meantime, however, Shakespeare had revised his work, and the new version was put upon the stage in 1603. Then Roberts or Ling came to terms with the company, and was allowed to publish a second and authorized edition from the poet's manuscript. Thus the Second Quarto represents the completest form of the drama, as performed in 1604. But it nearly always happens that when a play has been on the boards some little time, it requires "cutting" and altering in detail for stage purposes. It was so with *Hamlet*. In particular, some of the soliloquies proved too long. And in the same way, a few new passages were from time to time introduced. These alterations would naturally be inserted in the stage-copy, and from this stage-copy the First Folio was printed in 1623. A good deal of this sketch is merely hypothesis, but at least it is a hypothesis that gives an intelligible theory of the relation between the various versions.

The distinction between the Quarto and Folio text was maintained throughout the seventeenth century. The Folios of 1632 (F 2), 1664 (F 3), and 1685 (F 4) all reproduce in the main the text of 1623. Quarto editions were published during the poet's lifetime in 1605 (Q 3) and 1611 (Q 4). The date of Q 5, which follows Q 4, is unknown. Then come the Quarto of 1637 (Q 6), and what are called the Players' Quartos of 1676, 1683, and 1703. All of these follow the Second Quarto, with certain emendations of their own.

The first actor of the part of Hamlet was doubtless Richard Burbage. A record of his performance is preserved in an elegy upon his death, written perhaps in 1619.[2] The lines run as follows:

[1] Cf. Dowden, *Shakspere: his Mind and Art;* preface to third edition.

[2] On the various versions of this elegy, and their authenticity, see Ingleby, *Shakespere: the Man and the Book*, Part II. The four bracketed lines are probably spurious.

"He's gone, and with him what a world are dead
[Which he reviv'd, to be revived so
No more: young Hamlet, old Hieronimo,
King Leir, the grieved Moor, and more beside,
That liv'd in him, have now for ever died.]
Oft have I seen him leap into the grave,
Suiting the person, that he seem'd to have,
Of a sad lover, with so true an eye,
That there I would have sworn he meant to die.
Oft have I seen him play this part in jest,
So lively, that spectators and the rest
Of his sad crew, while he but seemed to bleed,
Amazed thought ev'n then he died indeed."

Burbage was succeeded by Joseph Taylor, and from Taylor the tradition of the part was handed down to Thomas Betterton, the famous actor of the Restoration.

3. SOURCES OF THE PLOT

Hamlet first appears in the *Historia Danica* of Saxo Grammaticus. This chronicler lived at the end of the twelfth century, and his work was first printed at Paris in 1514. The story of Hamlet or Amlethus is contained in the third and fourth books, under the reign of King Röricus. Grytha, the daughter of Röricus, was Hamlet's mother. From Saxo the story passed into European literature. Hans Sachs wrote a doggerel German version of it in 1558; and in 1570 it was included in the fifth volume of Francis de Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*, a collection in which the history of Romeo and Juliet is also found. The French version may have come under Shakespeare's notice, and an English translation of the *Historie of Hamblet* is in existence. But the only known edition of this was printed for Thomas Pavier in 1608. And though there may have been earlier issues, it is noticeable, as Elze has pointed out, that the translation diverges from the French original in one or two places, and that in these the influence of the play is plainly apparent. In any case only the outlines of Shakespeare's plot are to be found in the novel. "The murder of Hamlet's father," says Mr. Furness, "the marriage of his mother with the murderer, Hamlet's pretended madness, his interview with his mother, and his voyage to England, are nearly the only points in common." With the exception of Amleth and Geruth, the very names are different. In all probability Shakespeare had before him only the earlier play on the subject already referred to.

Numerous attempts have been made to identify the characters of the play with actual men and women of the Elizabethan age. One critic holds that Hamlet is throughout a satire on the famous essayist, Michel de Montaigne. Another believes that the whole tragedy is a veiled picture of the relations between Mary Queen of Scots, Darnley, Bothwell, and James the First. Yet other theorists interpret Hamlet as Sir Philip Sidney; Polonius, Laertes, and Ophelia as Lord Burleigh, Robert and Anne Cecil; Claudius as Sir Nicholas Bacon; Horatio as Hubert Languet; Marcellus, Bernardo, and Lamond as Fulke Greville, Edward Dyer, and Sir Walter Raleigh. The want of definite evidence for these conjectures makes it unnecessary to discuss them at length. They are suggestive to the imagination rather than to the reason, and from the imaginative point of view I have ventured to say a word on one of them at the close of this Introduction.

4. CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The criticism of *Hamlet* is apt to center round the question, Was Hamlet mad? The problem is not merely insoluble; it cannot even be propounded in an intelligible guise. Psychology knows no rigid dividing line between the sane and the insane. The pathologist, indeed, may distinguish certain abnormal conditions of brain-areas, and call them diseased; or the lawyer may apply practical tests to determine the point where restraint of individual liberty becomes necessary in the public interest. But beyond this you cannot go; you cannot, from any wider point of view, lay your finger upon one element here or there in the infinite variety of human character and say, "That way madness lies." Of one thing, however, we may be sure: Shakespeare did not mean Hamlet to be mad in any sense that would put his actions in a quite different category from those of other men. That would have been to divest his work of humanity and leave it meaningless. For the tragedy of *Hamlet* does not lie in the fact that it begins with a murder and ends with a massacre; it is something deeper, more spiritual than that. The most tragic, the most affecting thing in the world is the ruin of a high soul. This is the theme of *Hamlet;* it is a tragedy of failure, of a great nature confronted with a low environment, and so, by the perversity of things, made ineffective and disastrous through its own greatness. Keeping, then, this central idea in mind, let us attempt an analysis of the play in which it is set forth.

Hamlet is presented to us as a man of sensitive temperament

and high intellectual gifts. He is no ordinary prince; his spirit has been touched to finer issues; his wit is keen-edged and dipped in irony; his delicacy of moral insight is unusual among the ruder Danes. He is no longer in his first youth when the play opens, but up to that moment his life has been serene and undisturbed. His father's unexpected death has called him back from the University of Wittenberg, where his time had been spent in an atmosphere of studious calm and philosophic speculation. His tastes are those of the scholar: he loves to read for hours together, and, like most literary men, he takes great delight in the stage, and is familiar with its theory and practice. He is no recluse: he has the genius for friendship and for love; when at Elsinore he has been conspicuous in the gallant exercises of the age. He is the darling of the court and beloved by the people. But his real interest is all in speculation, in the play of mind around a subject, in the contemplation of it on all sides and from every point of view. Such a training has not fitted him to act a kingly part in stirring times. The intellectual element in him has come to outweigh the practical; the vivid consciousness of many possible courses of conduct deters him from the strenuous pursuit of one; so that he has lost the power of deliberate purposeful action, and, by a strange paradox, if this thoughtful man acts at all, it must be from impulse.

Quite suddenly the dreamer finds himself face to face with a thing to be done. According to the ethics of the day, it becomes his imperative duty to revenge his father's murder — a difficult task, in which success might well seem doubtful. But Hamlet does not shrink at first from recognizing the obligation; it is "cursed spite" that the burden of setting the world straight should have fallen upon him, but he will not refuse to shoulder it. The habits of a lifetime, however, are not to be thrown off so easily. As the excitement of the Ghost's revelation passes away, the laws of character begin to reassert themselves. The necessity of "thinking it over" is potent with Hamlet. Instead of revealing the situation to his friends and enlisting their assistance, he binds them to secrecy and forms the plan of pretending madness that he may gain time to consider his position. Let us consider it with him.

In the first place, he is absolutely alone. The court at Elsinore is filled with quite ordinary people, none of whom can understand him, to none of whom he can look for help. This note of contrast between Hamlet and his surroundings is struck again and again. They are of another world than his, limited, commonplace, incapable of ideals. His motives and feelings, his scruples and hesitations, are hopelessly beyond their comprehension. And therefore

— this is the irony of it — most of them are far more fitted to deal with a practical crisis in life than is this high-strung idealist of a prince. There are "the good king and queen": Claudius, shrewd and ready for an emergency, one who has set foot in the paths of villainy and will not turn back, for all the dim visitings of momentary remorse; Gertrude, a slave to the stronger nature, living in the present, unable to realize her own moral degradation. There is Horatio, a straightforward, upright soldier, one whom Hamlet intensely respects, comes even to envy, but who is not subtle enough to be of much use to him. There is Polonius, a played-out state official, vain and slow-witted, pattering words of wisdom that he does not understand and cannot put into practice. There are his son and daughter, Laertes and Ophelia: Laertes, a shallow, vigorous young noble, quick with a word and quick with a blow, but demoralized by the *esprit Gaulois;* Ophelia, a timid, conventional girl, too fragile a reed for a man to lean upon. Hamlet loves her, and she loves Hamlet, but it is not a love that will bear him through the deep waters of affliction. The courtiers are typified by Osric the waterfly, and by Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, of whom if you say Rosencrantz and Guildenstern it makes no difference: echoes, nonentities. With Hamlet on one side and these on the other, the elements of a tragedy are complete; the problem can work out to no satisfactory conclusion.

Once Hamlet has shrunk from immediate action, the possibilities of delay exercise an irresistible fascination over him. The ingenuity of his intellect exhausts itself in the discovery of obstacles; he takes every turn and twist to avoid the fatal necessity for action. At first he turns to Ophelia, the well-beloved: she will give him strength to accomplish his mission. But the scene in her closet, and still more the lie that she tells when her father is behind the arras, confess her weakness and compel him to renunciation. In the meantime, he continues the assumption of madness. It serves a double purpose: it frees him from the intolerable burden of keeping on good terms with Claudius and the rest; he can fight out the battle with himself in peace, while he mocks them with the ironies congenial to his mood. Also, he can let himself go: the strain of his overwrought mind relieves itself in bursts of an extravagance only half affected. He plays the madman to prevent himself from becoming one. But he comes no nearer the solution of his problem. He has considered the whole matter and cannot decide. His thoughts slip away from the plain issue and lose themselves in a bitter criticism of all created things. In this the speculative temper infallibly betrays itself. The interest of the

universal, not of the particular, is always dominant with Hamlet; not his mother's sin, but the frailty of women, is his natural theme. And so it is with a pang that he constantly recalls himself to the insistent actual life, from the world in which he is a past-master to that wherein he gropes ineffectually. Of course, he is fully aware of his own weakness: a deficiency of self-analysis is not likely to be one of his failings; but this does not give him power to throw it off, nor help him from his maze of recurring dilemmas. More than once he is on the point of cutting the knot by death, but even for that he has not the resolution.

At last the crisis comes. Hamlet has resolved that the play scene shall decide once for all the question of the king's guilt. That guilt is made most manifest, and the opportunity for revenge is offered him. He does not take it. Covering his weakness with unreal reasons, he passes into the queen's chamber. After that it is too late. The impetuous murder of Polonius is the first link in a chain of calamities. Moreover, it gives Claudius his chance. The king has never been wholly deceived by Hamlet's madness. Hamlet is sent to England, and escapes that trap only to fall into another. True, in the end the king dies by one impulsive stroke; but that cannot repair the ruin caused by Hamlet's want of purpose: the infinitely sad fate of Ophelia; the deaths of Polonius, Laertes, Gertrude, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern. All these are a sacrifice on the altar of his infirmity. Only for Hamlet himself was the fatal blow "a consummation devoutly to be wished."

The ineffectiveness of the speculative intellect in a world of action — that is the keynote of the play. In Hamlet, as in Brutus, the idealist gets the worst of it, and we are left to wonder at the irony of it. And just as the figure of Brutus is set between the two triumphant Philistines, Cæsar and Antony, so Shakespeare is careful to provide a similar contrast for Hamlet. This is to be found to some extent in Horatio and Laertes, but still more in the Norwegian, Fortinbras. The very existence of Fortinbras and the danger with which he threatens the state show the need of an iron hand in Denmark. Hamlet's reflections on his meeting with the Norwegian soldiers emphasize the same point, and the final appearance of Fortinbras and his selection by Hamlet as the true savior of society are fully significant. It is the lesson of *Henry V*, the lesson of the "still strong man in a blatant land." But in Hamlet it is the other side that is apparent: not the political principle, but the human tragedy, — the ruin of the great soul because it is not strong, practical.

It would be an interesting task to estimate how far the genius

of Shakespeare has been impaired for a modern reader by the change in sentiments brought about by the lapse of three crowded centuries. An Elizabethan dramatist could appeal with confidence to sympathies that are evanescent to-day. *The Merchant of Venice,* for instance, in spite of all its beauty and all its wit, bears an air of unreality to us because its leading motive, that of the *Judenhetze,* no longer finds an echo outside the limits of Whitechapel. Probably Mr. Irving's histrionic instinct was right when it led him to convert a villain into a hero, and to present the play as an apology for toleration, though this was an idea foreign to Shakespeare and impossible on the boards of the Theatre. It is remarkable, however, that there is one tragedy at least in which the normal law is reversed, which is more vivid, more intelligible to us than it could have been to our Elizabethan ancestors. Modern civilization has indeed discarded the ethics of the *vendetta.* The moral sentiment that holds revenge for a father's murder to be a binding duty upon the son no longer appears obvious and natural. An effort of the historic imagination is required to grasp its importance as a leading idea in the drama of *Hamlet.* But with the dominant figure, with Hamlet himself, it is otherwise. A prolonged study of the character leaves one with the startling sense that out of the plenitude of his genius Shakespeare has here depicted a type of humanity that belongs essentially not to his age but to our own. There was, we know, an older *Hamlet,* a popular revenge-play, pulsating, no doubt, like *Titus Andronicus,* with blood and fire. Into the midst of such a story the poet has deliberately set this modern born out of due time, this high-strung dreamer, who moves through it to such tragic issues. The keynote of Hamlet's nature is the over-cultivation of the mind. He is the academic man, the philosopher brought suddenly into the world of strenuous action. The fatal habit of speculation — fatal at Elsinore, however proper and desirable at Wittenberg — is his undoing. Cursed with the

> "craven scruple
> Of thinking too precisely on the event,"

he is predestined to practical failure, failure from which no delicacy of moral fiber, no truth and intensity of feeling, can save him.

Was Shakespeare, then, a prophet, or how came he to hit upon a conception so alien to the "form and pressure" of the time? One thinks of Elizabethan England as vigorous and ardent, flushed with youth and hope, little vexed with intellectual subtleties. Laertes is its type, not Hamlet. Perhaps the *Sonnets,* with the personal insight that they give us into the poet's temper, help to

solve the problem. Shakespeare was not Hamlet, but he touched him on many sides. The maker, like the puppet, had his moments of world-weariness, and breathed his sigh for "restful death." But there is another than Shakespeare himself in whom we would willingly recognize in some measure the original of Hamlet. It is not needful to commit oneself to the growing modern theory that the dramas of Shakespeare, comedies and tragedies alike, are largely Aristophanic in their intent, filled with topical sketches and allusions to which in many cases the clue is now lost. But it is difficult not to think it probable that in this particular play the poet gathered some hints from the striking personality of Sir Philip Sidney. Sidney is curiously lacking in the characteristic Elizabethan blitheness: he looks by preference on the gloomy side of things. The pessimistic note comes out no less in his letters than in the bitter mockery of the famous dirge. And, like Hamlet, he was a scholar and an idealist, set in an uncongenial environment and always striving ineffectually to escape from it into the life of action. The lingering and futility of his later years were due in great measure to the force of external circumstance, yet something in them may also be traced, clearly enough, to irresolution and impotence of will. Nor can one fail to be struck by the parallel between the language common to the wits and poets of Elizabeth's court, in speaking of "the president of noblesse and of chivalry," and the lament of Ophelia over the unstrung nerves of her lover:

> "Oh, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
> The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword,
> The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
> The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
> The observed of all observers, quite, quite down!"

HAMLET

PRINCE OF DENMARK

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CLAUDIUS . . . . . King of Denmark
HAMLET Son to the late, and nephew to the present king
POLONIUS . . . . . Lord Chamberlain
HORATIO . . . . . Friend to Hamlet
LAERTES . . . . . Son to Polonius
VOLTIMAND
CORNELIUS
ROSENCRANTZ
GUILDENSTERN . . . . . Courtiers
OSRIC
A Gentleman
A Priest
MARCELLUS
BERNARDO . . . . . Officers
FRANCISCO . . . . . A soldier
REYNALDO . . . . . Servant to Polonius
Players
Two clowns . . . . . Grave-diggers
FORTINBRAS . . . . . Prince of Norway
A Captain
English Ambassadors

GERTRUDE . Queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet
OPHELIA . . . . . Daughter to Polonius

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants

Ghost of Hamlet's Father

SCENE — DENMARK

HAMLET

PRINCE OF DENMARK

ACT I

SCENE I — *Elsinore. A platform before the castle*

FRANCISCO *at his post. Enter to him* BERNARDO

Ber. Who 's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'T is now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief much thanks: 't is bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who 's there?

Enter Horatio *and* Marcellus

Hor. Friends to this ground.
Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.
Fran. Give you good night.
Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier:
Who hath relieved you?
Fran. Bernardo has my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit.*
Mar. Holla! Bernardo!
Ber. Say,
What, is Horatio there?
Hor. A piece of him.
Ber. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.
Hor. What, has this thing appear'd again tonight?
Ber. I have seen nothing.
Mar. Horatio says 't is but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night;
That if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.
Hor. Tush, tush, 't will not appear.
Ber. Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story
What we have two nights seen.
Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,
When yond same star that 's westward from the pole
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one, —

Enter GHOST

Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that 's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See, it stalks away!

Hor. Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak! [*Exit Ghost.*

Mar. 'T is gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale:
Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you on 't?
Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.
Mar. Is it not like the king?
Hor. As thou art to thyself:
Such was the very armour he had on
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded pole-axe on the ice.
'T is strange.
Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.
Hor. In what particular thought to work I know not;
But in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.
Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day:
Who is 't that can inform me?
Hor. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,

Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet—
For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant,
And carriage of the article design'd,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unapproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in 't; which is no other—
As it doth well appear unto our state—
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsatory, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Ber. I think it be no other but e'en so:
Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
That was and is the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,

A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
And even the like precurse of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen. —
But soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!

Re-enter Ghost

I 'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice, [*It spreads*
Speak to me: *its arms.*
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
Speak to me:
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[*The cock crows.*
Speak of it: stay, and speak! Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber. 'T is here!

Hor. 'T is here!

Mar. 'T is gone! [*Exit Ghost.*
We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.
Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.
Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine: and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.
Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long:
And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.
Hor. So have I heard and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill:
Break we our watch up; and by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,

As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let 's do 't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *A room of state in the castle*

Enter Claudius, King of Denmark, Gertrude the Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes and his sister Ophelia, Lords Attendant

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress to this warlike state,
Have we, as 't were with a defeated joy, —
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole, —
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,

Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him.
Now for ourself and for this time of meeting:
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, —
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose, — to suppress
His further gait herein; in that the levies,
The lists and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject: and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope
Of these delated articles allow.
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. } In that and all things will we show our
Vol. } duty.

King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.
[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

And now, Laertes, what 's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is 't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice: what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.

What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laboursome petition, and at last
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son, —

Ham. [*Aside*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st 't is common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not "seems."

'T is not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected 'haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'T is sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father:
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow: but to persever
In obstinate condolement is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 't is unmanly grief;
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd:
For what we know must be and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we in our peevish opposition
Take it to heart? Fie! 't is a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd; whose common theme

Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day,
"This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father: for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire:
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
Hamlet:
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 't is a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come;
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable,

Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on 't! ah fie! 't is an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead: nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month—
Let me not think on 't—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears:—why she, even she—
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer—married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules: within a month:
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not nor it cannot come to good:
But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue.

Enter Horatio, Marcellus, *and* Bernardo

Hor. Hail to your lordship!
Ham. I am glad to see you well:

Horatio, — or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I 'll change that name with you:

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio? Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord —

Ham. I am very glad to see you. Good even, sir.

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so,

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,

To make it truster of your own report

Against yourself: I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore?

We 'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!

My father — methinks I see my father.

Hor. Where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him — once; he was a goodly king.
Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.
Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.
Ham. Saw? who?
Hor. My lord, the king your father.
Ham. The king my father!
Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.
Ham. For God's love, let me hear.
Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waste and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them the third night kept the watch:
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes: I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.
Ham. But where was this?
Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?
Hor. My lord, I did;
But answer made it none: yet once methought
It lifted up its head and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.
Ham. 'T is very strange.
Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 't is true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.
Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?
Mar. *Ber.* We do, my lord.
Ham. Arm'd, say you?
Mar. *Ber.* Arm'd, my lord.
Ham. From top to toe?
Mar. *Ber.* My lord, from head to foot.
Ham. Then saw you not his face?
Hor. Oh, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.
Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?
Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.
Ham. Pale or red?
Hor. Nay, very pale.
Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?
Hor. Most constantly.
Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amazed you.
Ham. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?
Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.
Mar. } Longer, longer.
Ber. }
Hor. Not when I saw 't.
Ham. His beard was grizzled, — no?
Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.
Ham. I will watch to-night;
Perchance 't will walk again.
Hor. I warrant it will.
Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I 'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue:
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I 'll visit you.
All. Our duty to your honour.
Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: farewell.
[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*
My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.
[*Exit.*

Scene III — *A room in Polonius' house*

Enter Laertes *and* Ophelia

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd: farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and health of this whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it

As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclosed,
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then; best safety lies in fear:
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede.

Laer. O, fear me not.
I stay too long: but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear 't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are of a most select and generous choice in that.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you; go; your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph. 'T is in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Pol. What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought: 90
'T is told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:
If it be so, as so 't is put on me,
And that in way of caution, I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly
As it behoves my daughter and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me. 100

Pol. Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I 'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,

Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or — not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus — you 'll tender me a fool.
Oph. My lord, he hath importuned me with love
In honourable fashion.
Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.
Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.
Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young,
And with a larger tether may he walk
Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,
The better to beguile. This is for all:
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment leisure,

As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to 't, I charge you: come your ways.
Oph. I shall obey my lord. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *The platform*

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, *and* Marcellus

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.
Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.
Mar. No, it is struck.
Hor. Indeed? I heard it not: then it draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.
[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*
What does this mean, my lord?
Ham. The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.
Hor. Is it a custom?
Ham. Ay, marry, is 't:
But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduced and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase

Soil our addition; and indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth — wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin —
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausive manners, that these men,
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star, —
Their virtues else — be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo —
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: the dram of eale
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
To his own scandal.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Enter Ghost

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee: I 'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me!
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,

Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?
[*Ghost beckons Hamlet.*

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again: I 'll follow it.

Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts toys of desperation,

Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still.
Go on; I 'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be ruled; you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.
Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen.
By heaven, I 'll make a ghost of him that lets me!
I say, away! Go on; I 'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let 's follow; 't is not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after. To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let 's follow him. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V — *Another part of the platform*

Enter Ghost *and* Hamlet

Ham. Where wilt thou lead me? speak; I 'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,

When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak; I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine:
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love —

Ham. O God!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Ham. Murder!

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.
Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'T is given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abused: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.
Ham. O my prophetic soul!
My uncle!
Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts, —
O wicked wits and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce! — won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen:
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage, and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be moved,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,

And prey on garbage.
But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed Hebona in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd:
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unaneled,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught: leave her to heaven
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!

The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire:
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. [*Exit.*

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! what else?
And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I 'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven!
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables, — meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least I 'm sure it may be so in Denmark:
[*Writing.*
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is "Adieu, adieu! remember me."
I have sworn 't.

Hor. } [*Within*] My lord, my lord, —
Mar. }

Mar. [*Within*] Lord Hamlet, —

Hor. [*Within*] Heaven secure him!

Ham. So be it!

Hor. [*Within*] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!
Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Enter Horatio *and* Marcellus

Mar. How is 't, my noble lord?
Hor. What news, my lord?
Ham. O, wonderful!
Hor. Good my lord, tell it.
Ham. No; you 'll reveal it.
Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.
Mar. Nor I, my lord.
Ham. How say you, then; would heart of man once think it?
But you 'll be secret?
Hor. } Ay, by heaven, my lord.
Mar. }
Ham. There 's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he 's an arrant knave.
Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.
Ham. Why, right; you are i' the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:
You, as your business and desire shall point you;
For every man has business and desire,
Such as it is; and for mine own poor part,
Look you, I 'll go pray.
Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Ham. I 'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, 'faith, heartily.
Hor. There 's no offence, my lord.
Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster 't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.
Hor. What is 't, my lord? we will.
Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.
Hor. } My lord, we will not.
Mar. }
Ham. Nay, but swear 't.
Hor. In faith,
My lord, not I.
Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.
Ham. Upon my sword.
Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.
Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.
Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.
Ham. Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny?
Come on — you hear this fellow in the cellarage —
Consent to swear.
Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.
Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.

Ham. Hic et ubique? then we 'll shift our ground.

Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Never to speak of this that you have heard,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.

Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so fast?
A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good friends.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.
But come;
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on,
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As "Well, well, we know," or "We could, an if we would,"
Or "If we list to speak," or "There be, an if they might,"
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me: this not to do,

So grace and mercy at your most need help you, 180
Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! [*They swear.*]
So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right! 190
Nay, come, let 's go together. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Scene I — *A room in Polonius' house*

Enter Polonius *and* Reynaldo

Pol. Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquire
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,

What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it.
Take you, as 't were, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus, "I know his father and his friends,
And in part him": do you mark this, Reynaldo?
Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.
Pol. "And in part him; but" you may say
"not well:
But, if 't be he I mean, he 's very wild;
Addicted so and so": and there put on him
What forgeries you please: marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.
Rey. As gaming, my lord.
Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing: you may go so far.
Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.
Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That 's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly
That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord, —
Pol. Wherefore should you do this?
Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.
Pol. Marry, sir, here 's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 't were a thing a little soil'd i' the working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured
He closes with you in this consequence;
"Good sir," or so, or "friend," or "gentleman,"
According to the phrase or the addition
Of man and country.
Rey. Very good, my lord.
Pol. And then, sir, does he this — he does —
What was I about to say? By the mass, I was about to say something: where did I leave?
Rey. At "closes in the consequence," at "friend or so," and "gentleman."
Pol. At "closes in the consequence," ay, marry;
He closes thus: "I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday, or t' other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was a' gaming; there o'ertook in 's rouse;
There falling out at tennis": or perchance,
"I saw him enter such a house of sale,"
Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.
See you now;

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out:
So by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

Pol. God be wi' you; fare you well.

Rey. Good my lord!

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his music.

Rey. Well, my lord.

Pol. Farewell! [*Exit Reynaldo.*

Enter Ophelia

How now, Ophelia! what 's the matter?

Oph. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

Pol. With what, i' the name of God?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors, — he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last, a little shaking of mine arm
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being: that done, he lets me go:
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o' doors he went without their helps,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me: I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord, but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters and denied
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry that with better heed and judgement
I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but trifle.
And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions

As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide than hate to utter love. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *A room in the castle*

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, *and* Attendants

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it,
Since nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
That, being of so young days brought up with him,
And since so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time: so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;

And sure I am two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz:
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some Attendants.*

Enter Polonius

Pol. The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,

Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? I assure my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God and to my gracious king:
And I do think, or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath used to do, that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in. [*Exit Polonius.*

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

King. Well, we shall sift him.

Re-enter Polonius, *with* Voltimand *and* Cornelius

Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Volt. Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: whereat grieved,
That so his sickness, age and impotence
Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests

On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway, and in fine
Makes vow before his uncle never more
To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,
And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:
With an entreaty, herein further shown,
[*Giving a paper.*
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety and allowance
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well;
And at our more consider'd time we 'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Meantime we thank you for your well-took labour:
Go to your rest; at night we 'll feast together:
Most welcome home!
[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

Pol. This business is well ended.
My liege, and madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief: your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is 't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 't is true: 't is true 't is pity;
And pity 't is 't is true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then: and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.
I have a daughter — have while she is mine —
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: now gather, and surmise.
[*Reads.*
"To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia," —
That 's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; "beautified" is a vile phrase: but you shall hear. Thus: [*Reads.*
"In her excellent white bosom, these, &c."

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful. [*Reads.*

"Doubt thou the stars are fire;
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.

"O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.

"Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, Hamlet."

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me,
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means and place,
All given to mine ear.
King. But how hath she
Received his love?
Pol. What do you think of me?
King. As of a man faithful and honourable.
Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing —
As I perceived it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me — what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk or table-book,
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? No, I went round to work,
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
"Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;
This must not be": and then I prescripts gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed — a short tale to make —
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.
King. Do you think 't is this?
Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time — I 'd fain know that —
That I have positively said " 'T is so,"
When it proved otherwise?
King. Not that I know.
Pol. [*Pointing to his head and shoulder*] Take this from this, if this be otherwise:
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.
King. How may we try it further?
Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together
Here in the lobby.
Queen. So he does indeed.
Pol. At such a time I 'll loose my daughter to him:
Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter: if he love her not
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.
King. We will try it.
Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.
Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away:
I 'll board him presently.

[*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*

Enter Hamlet, *reading*

O, give me leave!
How does my good Lord Hamlet?
Ham. Well, God-a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord!

Ham. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That 's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion, — Have you a daughter?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing: but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to 't.

Pol. [*Aside*] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter: yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger: he is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I 'll speak to him again. What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to

have it thus set down, for yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

Pol. [*Aside*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't. Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave.

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' the air. [*Aside*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. — My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal: except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. [*To Polonius*] God save you, sir!

[*Exit Polonius.*

Guil. My honoured lord!

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not over-happy; On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours? What's the news?

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world 's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near: but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark 's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then, 't is none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why then, your ambition makes it one; 't is too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God, I could be bounded in a nut-shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros. } We 'll wait upon you.
Guil. }

Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Ros. [*Aside to Guil.*] What say you?

Ham. [*Aside*] Nay, then, I have an eye of you. — If you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late — but wherefore I know not — lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me: no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said "man delights not me"?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; His majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for 't. What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? are they so followed?

Ros. No, indeed, are they not.

Ham. How comes it? do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't: these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages — so they call them — that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? who maintains 'em? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing?

will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players — as it is most like, if their means are no better — their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is 't possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.

Ham. It is not very strange; for mine uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Re-enter Polonius

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern; and you too: at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

Ros. Happily he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. You say right, sir: o' Monday morning; 't was so indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome, —

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon mine honour, —

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass, —

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why,

"One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well."

Pol. [*Aside*] Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

Ham. Why,

"As by lot, God wot,"

and then, you know,

"It came to pass, as most like it was," —

the first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look, where my abridgement comes.

Enter four or five Players

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends. O, my old friend! thy face is valanced since I saw thee last: comest thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress! By 'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We 'll e'en to 't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: we 'll have a speech straight: come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

First Player. What speech, my lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once,

but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 't was caviare to the general: but it was — as I received it, and others, whose judgements in such matters cried in the top of mine — an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 't was Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: if it live in your memory, begin at this line: let me see, let me see —

"The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,"

— it is not so: — it begins with Pyrrhus: —

"The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules; horridly trick'd
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Baked and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their lord's murder: roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,

With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks."
So, proceed you.

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

First Player. "Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo! his sword
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless and the orb below
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region, so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour forged for proof eterne
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power:

Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!"

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard. Prithee, say on: he 's for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps: say on: come to Hecuba.

First Player. "But who, O, who had seen the mobled queen —"

Ham. "The mobled queen?"

Pol. That's good; "mobled queen" is good.

First Player. "Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames
With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced:
But if the gods themselves did see her then
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
Unless things mortal move them not at all,
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods."

Pol. Look, whether he has not turned his colour and has tears in 's eyes. Pray you, no more.

Ham. 'T is well; I 'll have thee speak out the rest soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time: after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. God's bodykins, man, much better: use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends: we 'll hear a play to-morrow. [*Exit Polonius with all the Players but the First.*] Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the Murder of Gonzago?

First Player. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We 'll ha 't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in 't, could you not?

First Player. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player.*] My good friends, I 'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' ye; [*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*] Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What 's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears.
Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? who does me this?
Ha!
'Swounds, I should take it: for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall

To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal: bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O, vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!
Fie upon 't! foh! About, my brain! I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I 'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle: I 'll observe his looks;
I 'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil: and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me: I 'll have grounds
More relative than this: the play 's the thing
Wherein I 'll catch the conscience of the king.

[*Exit.*

ACT III

Scene I — *A room in the castle*

Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern

King. And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way: of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: they are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'T is most true:
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclined.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.
Ros. We shall, my lord.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 't were by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia:
Her father and myself, lawful espials,
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge,
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.
Queen. I shall obey you.
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.
Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit Queen.*
Pol. Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves. [*To Ophelia*] Read on this book;
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this, —
'T is too much proved — that with devotion's visage

And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. [*Aside*] O, 't is too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burthen!

Pol. I hear him coming: let 's withdraw, my lord. [*Exeunt King and Polonius.*

Enter Hamlet

Ham. To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 't is nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 't is a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there 's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there 's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,

When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action. — Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well you did;
And, with them, words of so sweet breath composed
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord?

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where 's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in 's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I 'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go: farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. O heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I 'll no more on 't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit.*

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,

Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King *and* Polonius

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There 's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger: which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on 't?

Pol. It shall do well: but yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief: let her be round with him;
And I 'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,

To England send him, or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *A hall in the castle*

Enter Hamlet *and* Players

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

First Player. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first

and now, was and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

First Player. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that 's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt Players.*

Enter Polonius, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern

How now, my lord: will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste. [*Exit Polonius.*] Will you two help to hasten them?

Ros. } We will, my lord.
Guil. }

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Ham. What ho! Horatio!

Enter Horatio

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord, —

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those
Whose blood and judgement are so well commingled,
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,

As I do thee. — Something too much of this. —
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death:
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgements join
In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord:
If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle:
Get you a place.

Danish march. A flourish. Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern *and others*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise-crammed: you cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now. [*To Polonius*] My lord, you played once i' the university, you say?

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. What did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here 's metal more attractive. [*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*

Pol. [*To the King*] O, ho! do you mark that?

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 't is twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I 'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there 's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: but, by 'r lady, he must build churches, then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters

Enter a King *and a* Queen *very lovingly; the* Queen *embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the* King's *ears, and exit. The* Queen *returns; finds the* King *dead, and makes passionate action. The* Poisoner, *with some two or three* Mutes, *comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The* Poisoner *wooes the* Queen *with gifts: she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.* [*Exeunt.*

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they 'll tell all.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here, stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently. [*Exit.*

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'T is brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter two Players, King *and* Queen

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt-wash and Tellus' orbed ground,

And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.
P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
For women's fear and love holds quantity;
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is sized, my fear is so:
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.
P. King. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, beloved; and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou —
P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.
Ham. [*Aside*] Wormwood, wormwood.
P. Queen. The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:

A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.
P. King. I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity:
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 't is that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy:
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye, nor 't is not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 't is a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend;
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun,
Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown;

Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy
Meet what I would have well and it destroy!
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now!

P. King. 'T is deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile;
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain!
[*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she 'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in 't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in

Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 't is a knavish piece of work: but what o' that? your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

Enter Lucianus

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you mistake your husbands. Begin, murderer; pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: "the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge."

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.
[*Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for 's estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian: you shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What, frighted with false fire!
Queen. How fares my lord?
Pol. Give o'er the play.
King. Give me some light: away!
All. Lights, lights, lights!
[*Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.*
Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep:
So runs the world away.
Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers — if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me — with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?
Hor. Half a share.
Ham. A whole one, I.
For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very — pajock.
Hor. You might have rhymed.
Ham. O good Horatio, I 'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?
Hor. Very well, my lord.
Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning?
Hor. I did very well note him.
Ham. Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the recorders!
For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.
Come, some music!

Re-enter Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir, —

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir: pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit 's diseased: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my

mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say, —

Ros. Then thus she says; your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but, "While the grass grows," — the proverb is something musty.

Re-enter Players *with recorders*

O, the recorders! let me see one. To withdraw with you: — why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'T is as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.

Enter Polonius

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that 's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 't is like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then I will come to my mother by and by. They fool me to the top of my bent. I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so.

Ham. By and by is easily said. [*Exit Polonius.*]
Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*
'T is now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*

Scene III — *A room in the castle*

Enter King, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you:
The terms of our estate may not endure

Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.
Guil. We will ourselves provide:
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your majesty.
Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from noyance; but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What 's near it with it: it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortised and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.
King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.
Ros. } We will haste us.
Guil. }

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Enter Polonius

Pol. My lord, he 's going to his mother's closet:
Behind the arras I 'll convey myself,
To hear the process; I 'll warrant she 'll tax him home:

And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'T is meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
I 'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit Polonius.*

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will:
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what 's in prayer but this two-fold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I 'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murder"?
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,

And oft 't is seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 't is not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: what can it not?
Yet what can it when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*

Enter Hamlet

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
And now I 'll do 't. And so he goes to heaven:
And so am I revenged. That would be scann'd:
A villain kills my father; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
'T is heavy with him: and am I then revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No!

Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

King. [*Rising*] My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.
[*Exit.*

Scene IV — *The Queen's closet*

Enter Queen *and* Polonius

Pol. He will come straight. Look you lay home to him:
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I 'll silence me even here.
Pray you, be round with him.

Ham. [*Within*] Mother, mother, mother!

Queen. I 'll warrant you,
Fear me not: withdraw, I hear him coming.
[*Polonius hides behind the arras.*

Enter Hamlet

Ham. Now, mother, what 's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!

Ham. What 's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And — would it were not so! — you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then, I 'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind*] What, ho! help, help, help!

Ham. [*Drawing*] How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead!
[*Makes a pass through the arras.*

Pol. [*Behind*] O, I am slain! [*Falls and dies.*

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not:
Is it the king?

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this:

Ham. A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,

As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham. Ay, lady, 't was my word.

[*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.*

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.
Leave wringing of your hands: peace! sit you down,
And let me wring your heart; for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff,
If damned custom have not brass'd it so
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love
And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ay me, what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow;

Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for at your age
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it 's humble,
And waits upon the judgement: and what judgement
Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
Else could you not have motion; but sure, that sense
Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd
But it reserved some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil was 't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame

When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn
And reason panders will.
Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct. O, speak to me no more;
These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet!
Ham. A murderer and a villain;
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!
Queen. No more!
Ham. A king of shreds and patches, —

Enter Ghost

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?
Queen. Alas, he 's mad!
Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!
Ghost. Do not forget: this visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look, amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul.

Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works:
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is 't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,
Start up, and stand an end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable. Do not look upon me;
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects: then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he lived!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[*Exit Ghost.*

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music: it is not madness
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what 's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue;
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either . . . the devil, or throw him out

With wondrous potency. Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I 'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,
[*Pointing to Polonius.*
I do repent: but heaven hath pleased it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'T were good you let him know;
For who, that 's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assured, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe

What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack,

I had forgot: 't is so concluded on.

Ham. There 's letters seal'd: and my two school-fellows,
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 't is the sport to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petar: and 't shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon: O, 't is most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.
This man shall set me packing:
I 'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.
Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally; Hamlet dragging in Polonius.*

ACT IV

Scene I — *A room in the castle*

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern

King. There 's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves:
You must translate: 't is fit we understand them.
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
Ah, mine own lord, what have I seen to-night!
King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?
Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier: in his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, "A rat, a rat!"
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.
King. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there:
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd and out of haunt,
This mad young man: but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?
Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.
King. O Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guildenstern!

Re-enter Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
Come, Gertrude, we 'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what 's untimely done . . .
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *Another room in the castle*

Enter Hamlet

Ham. Safely stowed.

Ros. } [*Within*] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!
Guil. }

Ham. But soft, what noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 't is kin.

Ros. Tell us where 't is, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge! what replication should be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir, that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing —

Guil. A thing, my lord!

Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III — *Another room in the castle*

Enter KING, *attended*

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:

He 's loved of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgement, but their eyes;
And where 't is so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all.

Enter Rosencrantz

How now! what hath befall'n?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter Hamlet *and* Guildenstern

King. Now, Hamlet, where 's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper! where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table: that 's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there. [*To some Attendants.*

Ham. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety, —

Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done, — must send thee hence
With fiery quickness: therefore prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Ham. For England!

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them. But, come; for England! Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England! [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard;
Delay it not; I 'll have him hence to-night:
Away! for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair: pray you, make haste.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught — 60
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us — thou mayst not coldly set
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters congruing to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me: till I know 't is done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. 70
[*Exit.*

Scene IV — *A plain in Denmark*

Enter Fortinbras, *a* Captain, *and* Soldiers, *marching*

Fort. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras
Craves the conveyance of a promised march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye;
And let him know so.

Cap. I will do 't, my lord.
Fort. Go softly on.
[*Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.*

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and others*

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?
Cap. They are of Norway, sir.
Ham. How purposed, sir, I pray you?
Cap. Against some part of Poland.
Ham. Who commands them, sir?
Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.
Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?
Cap. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it:
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.
Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.
Cap. Yes, it is already garrison'd.
Ham. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.
Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit.*
Ros. Will 't please you go, my lord?
Ham. I 'll be with you straight. Go a little before. [*Exeunt all except Hamlet.*

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward, I do not know
Why yet I live to say "This thing's to do";
Sith I have cause and will and strength and means
To do 't. Examples gross as earth exhort me:
Witness this army of such mass and charge
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd
Makes mouths at the invisible event,
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour 's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot

Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!
[*Exit.*

Scene V — *Elsinore. A room in the castle*

Enter Queen, Horatio, *and a* Gentleman

Queen. I will not speak with her.
Gent. She is importunate, indeed distract:
Her mood will needs be pitied.
Queen. What would she have?
Gent. She speaks much of her father; says she hears
There 's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection; they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.
Hor. 'T were good she were spoken with; for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.
Queen. Let her come in. [*Exit Horatio.*
To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,

Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter Horatio, *with* Ophelia

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia!

Oph. [*Sings*] How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.
[*Sings*] He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia, —

Oph. Pray you, mark.
[*Sings*] White his shroud as the mountain snow, —

Enter King

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. [*Sings*] Larded with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did go
With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:

[*Sings*] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it: and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit.*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit Horatio.*

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain:
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly,
In hugger-mugger to inter him: poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgement,
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts:
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France:

Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death. [*A noise within.*
Queen. Alack, what noise is this?
King. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.

Enter another Gentleman

What is the matter?
Gent. Save yourself, my lord:
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry "Choose we: Laertes shall be king":
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds:
"Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!"
Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!
King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*

Enter Laertes, *armed;* Danes *following*

Laer. Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all without.

Danes. No, let 's come in.
Laer. I pray you, give me leave.
Danes. We will, we will.
[*They retire without the door.*
Laer. I thank you: keep the door. O thou vile king,
Give me my father!
Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.
Laer. That drop of blood that 's calm proclaims me bastard,
Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brows
Of my true mother.
King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There 's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incensed. Let him go, Gertrude.
Speak, man.
Laer. Where is my father?
King. Dead.
Queen. But not by him.
King. Let him demand his fill.
Laer. How came he dead? I 'll not be juggled with:
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,

Let come what comes; only I 'll be revenged
Most thoroughly for my father.
King. Who shall stay you?
Laer. My will, not all the world:
And for my means, I 'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.
King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is 't writ in your revenge,
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?
Laer. None but his enemies.
King. Will you know them then?
Laer. To his good friends thus wide I 'll ope my arms;
And like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood.
King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgement pierce
As day does to your eye.
Danes. [*Within*] Let her come in.
Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter Ophelia

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,

Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heavens! is 't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love, and where 't is fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. [*Sings*]
They bore him barefaced on the bier;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;
And in his grave rain'd many a tear: —
Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

Oph. [*Sings*] You must sing a-down a-down,
An you call him a-down-a.
O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing 's more than matter.

Oph. There 's rosemary, that 's for remembrance; pray, love, remember: and there is pansies, that 's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There 's fennel for you, and columbines: there 's rue for you; and here 's some for me: we may call it herb-grace o' Sundays: O, you must wear your rue with a difference. There 's a daisy: I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died: they say he made a good end, —

[*Sings*] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Oph. [*Sings*] And will he not come again?
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead:
Go to thy death-bed:
He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll:
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan:
God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be wi' ye. [*Exit.*

Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so;
His means of death, his obscure burial —
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,

No noble rite nor formal ostentation —
Cry to be heard, as 't were from heaven to earth,
That I must call 't in question.

King. So you shall;
And where the offence is let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI — *Another room in the castle*

Enter Horatio *and a* Servant

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?

Serv. Sea-faring men, sir: they say they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in. [*Exit Servant.*
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors

First Sailor. God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

First Sailor. He shall, sir, an 't please him. There 's a letter for you, sir; it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [*Reads*] "Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship; so I alone became

their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy: but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

"He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet."

Come, I will make you way for these your letters;
And do 't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII — *Another room in the castle*

Enter King *and* Laertes

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

Laer. It well appears: but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,

But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself —
My virtue or my plague, be it either which —
She 's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections: but my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
I loved your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine —

Enter a Messenger

How now! what news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?
Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:
They were given me by Claudio; he received them
Of him that brought them.
King. Laertes, you shall hear them.
Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*
[*Reads*] "High and mighty, You shall know I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return.
"Hamlet."
What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?
Laer. Know you the hand?
King. 'T is Hamlet's character. "Naked!"
And in a postscript here, he says "alone."
Can you advise me?
Laer. I 'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
"Thus didest thou."
King. If it be so, Laertes —
As how should it be so? how otherwise? —
Will you be ruled by me?
Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.
King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,

As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice
And call it accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be ruled;
The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one, and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy: —
I 've seen myself, and served against, the French,
And they can well on horseback: but this gallant
Had witchcraft in 't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As had he been incorpsed and demi-natured
With the brave beast: so far he topp'd my thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman was 't?
King. A Norman.
Laer. Upon my life, Lamond.
King. The very same.
Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nation.
King. He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out, 't would be a sight indeed,
If one could match you: the scrimers of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this, —
Laer. What out of this, my lord?
King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?
Laer. Why ask you this?
King. Not that I think you did not love your father;
But that I know love is begun by time;
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still;

For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too much: that we would do,
We should do when we would; for this "would" changes
And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this "should" is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer: —
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?
Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.
King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home:
We 'll put on those shall praise your excellence
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together
And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,
Most generous and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.
Laer. I will do 't:
And, for that purpose, I 'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,

So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death
That is but scratch'd withal: I 'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let 's further think of this;
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape: if this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'T were better not assay'd: therefore this project
Should have a back or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof. Soft! let me see:
We 'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings:
I ha 't:
When in your motion you are hot and dry —
As make your bouts more violent to that end —
And that he calls for drink, I 'll have prepared him
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

Enter Queen

How now, sweet queen!

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow: your sister 's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come

Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes;
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element: but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas, then, she is drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord:
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts it. [*Exit.*

King. Let 's follow, Gertrude:
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again;
Therefore let 's follow. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

Scene I — *A churchyard*

Enter two Clowns, *with spades, &c.*

First Clo. Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

Sec. Clo. I tell thee she is: and therefore make her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

First Clo. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

Sec. Clo. Why, 't is found so.

First Clo. It must be "se offendendo"; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

Sec. Clo. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver, —

First Clo. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes, — mark you that; but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

Sec. Clo. But is this law?

First Clo. Ay, marry, is 't; crowner's quest law.

Sec. Clo. Will you ha' the truth on 't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

First Clo. Why, there thou say'st: and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession.

Sec. Clo. Was he a gentleman?

First Clo. 'A was the first that ever bore arms.

Sec. Clo. Why, he had none.

First Clo. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says "Adam digged": could he dig without arms? I 'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself —

Sec. Clo. Go to.

First Clo. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

Sec. Clo. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

First Clo. I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those who do ill: now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To 't again, come.

Sec. Clo. "Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?"

First Clo. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

Sec. Clo. Marry, now I can tell.

First Clo. To 't.

Sec. Clo. Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter Hamlet *and* Horatio, *at a distance*

First Clo. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say "a grave-maker": the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan: fetch me a stoup of liquor. [*Exit Sec. Clown.*

[*He digs, and sings.*

In youth, when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove,
O, methought, there was nothing meet.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'T is e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

First Clo. [*Sings*]

But age, with his stealing steps
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intil the land,
As if I had never been such.

[*Throws up a skull.*

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jawbone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier: which could say "Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so: and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: here 's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see 't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on 't.

First Clo. [*Sings*]

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

[*Throws up another skull.*

Ham. There 's another: why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in 's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very convey-

ances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave 's this, sirrah?

First Clo. Mine, sir.

[*Sings*] O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in 't.

First Clo. You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't and say it is thine: 't is for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

First Clo. 'T is a quick lie, sir; 't will away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

First Clo. For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

First Clo. For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in 't?

First Clo. One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she 's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked that

the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

First Clo. Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

First Clo. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

First Clo. Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it 's no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

First Clo. 'T will not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

First Clo. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

First Clo. Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

First Clo. Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

First Clo. I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die, he will last you some eight year or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

First Clo. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your dead body. Here 's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

First Clo. A mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

First Clo. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Ham. This?

First Clo. E'en that.

Ham. Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What 's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah! [*Puts down the skull.*

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'T were to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

But soft! but soft! aside: here comes the king,

Enter Priests, *&c. in procession; the Corpse of* Ophelia, Laertes *and* Mourners *following;* King, Queen, *their trains, &c.*

The queen, the courtiers: who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo it own life: 't was of some estate.
Couch we awhile, and mark.

[*Retiring with Horatio.*

Laer. What ceremony else?
Ham. That is Laertes,
A very noble youth: mark.
Laer. What ceremony else?
First Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarged
As we have warranty: her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodged
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints and pebbles should be thrown on her:
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.
Laer. Must there no more be done?
First Priest. No more be done:
We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.
Laer. Lay her i' the earth:
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.
Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!
Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell!
[*Scattering flowers.*
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.
Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,

Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:
[*Leaps into the grave.*
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*Advancing*] What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded heroes? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*

Laer. The devil take thy soul!
[*Grappling with him.*

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wiseness fear: hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen, —

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.
[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son, what theme?

Ham. I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers

Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?
King. O, he is mad, Laertes.
Queen. For love of God, forbear him.
Ham. 'Swounds, show me what thou 'lt do:
Woo 't weep? woo 't fight? woo 't fast? woo 't tear thyself?
Woo 't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
I 'll do 't. Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou 'lt mouth,
I 'll rant as well as thou.
Queen. This is mere madness:
And thus awhile the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
His silence will sit drooping.
Ham. Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I loved you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*
King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.
[*Exit Horatio.*
[*To Laertes*] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We 'll put the matter to the present push.
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.

This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *A hall in the castle*

Enter Hamlet *and* Horatio

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see the other:
You do remember all the circumstance?
Hor. Remember it, my lord!
Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,
And praised be rashness for it, let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall: and that should teach us
There 's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will, —
Hor. That is most certain.
Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them; had my desire,
Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again; making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio, —
O royal knavery! — an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons
Importing Denmark's health and England's too,

With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.
Hor. Is 't possible?
Ham. Here 's the commission: read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?
Hor. I beseech you.
Ham. Being thus be-netted round with villanies, —
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play — I sat me down,
Devised a new commission, wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair and labour'd much
How to forget that learning, but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service: wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?
Hor. Ay, good my lord.
Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm might flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like "As"es of great charge,
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.
Hor. How was this seal'd?
Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.

I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other,
Subscribed it, gave 't the impression, placed it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow:
'T is dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think'st thee, stand me now upon —
He that hath kill'd my king and whored my mother,
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage — is 't not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm? and is 't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;

And a man's life 's no more than to say "One."
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I 'll court his favours:
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace! who comes here?

Enter Osric

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir. Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 't is a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 't is a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 't is for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 't is very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, — as 't were, — I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head: sir, this is the matter, —

Ham. I beseech you, remember —

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is 't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do 't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all 's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know you are not ignorant —

Ham. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir?

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is —

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he 's unfellowed.

Ham. What 's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That 's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so: three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsible to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides: I would it might be hangers till then. But, on:

six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that 's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this "imponed," as you call it?

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How if I answer "no"?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, 't is the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Ham. Yours, yours. [*Exit Osric.*] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for 's turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he — and many more of the same breed that I know the drossy age dotes on — only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which

carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a Lord

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall; he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king and queen and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all 's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord, —

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestal their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury: there 's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 't is not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is 't to leave betimes?

Enter King, Queen, Laertes, Lords, Osric, *and* Attendants *with foils, &c.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts Laertes' hand into Hamlet's.*

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I 've done you wrong;
But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was 't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And when he 's not himself does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness: if 't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour
I stand aloof; and will no reconcilement,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungored. But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils. Come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I 'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric.
Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both:
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a length? [*They prepare to play.*

Osr. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,

Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
"Now the king drinks to Hamlet." Come, begin:
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgement.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well; again.

King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here 's to thy health.
[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*
Give him the cup.

Ham. I 'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.
Come. [*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He 's fat, and scant of breath.
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good madam!

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.
King. [*Aside*] It is the poison'd cup: it is too late.
Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.
Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.
Laer. My lord, I 'll hit him now.
King. I do not think 't.
Laer. [*Aside*] And yet 't is almost 'gainst my conscience.
Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes: you but dally;
I pray you, pass with your best violence;
I am afeard you make a wanton of me.
Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*
Osr. Nothing, neither way.
Laer. Have at you now!
[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*
King. Part them; they are incensed.
Ham. Nay, come, again. [*The Queen falls.*
Osr. Look to the queen there, ho!
Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord?
Osr. How is 't, Laertes?
Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.
Ham. How does the queen?
King. She swounds to see them bleed.
Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink, — O my dear Hamlet, —
The drink, the drink! I am poison'd. [*Dies.*

Ham. O villany! Ho! let the door be lock'd:
Treachery! Seek it out.
Laer. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good;
In thee there is not half an hour of life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenom'd: the foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again: thy mother 's poison'd:
I can no more: the king, the king 's to blame.
Ham. The point envenom'd too!
Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the King.*
All. Treason! treason!
King. O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.
Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?
Follow my mother. [*King dies.*
Laer. He is justly served;
It is a poison temper'd by himself.
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*
Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time — as this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest — O, I could tell you —

But let it be. Horatio, I am dead;
Thou livest; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.
Hor. Never believe it:
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:
Here 's yet some liquor left.
Ham. As thou 'rt a man,
Give me the cup: let go; by heaven, I 'll have 't.
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story. [*March afar off, and shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?
Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.
Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited. The rest is silence. [*Dies.*
Hor. Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince:
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

Enter Fortinbras, *the* English Ambassadors, *and others*

Fort. Where is this sight?
Hor. What is it ye would see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.
Fort. This quarry cries on havoc. O proud death,
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?
First Amb. The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?
Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you:
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arrived, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about: so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgements, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning and forced cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.
Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance,
On plots and errors, happen.
Fort. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally: and, for his passage,
The soldiers' music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.
Take up the bodies: such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[*A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies; after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.*

NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbott . . .	Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, 3d edition.
F 1	First Folio (1623) of Shakespeare's plays.
F 2	Second Folio (1632).
F 3	Third Folio (1663 and 1664).
F 4	Fourth Folio (1685).
Ff	The four Folios.
M. L. N. . .	*Modern Language Notes.*
Q 1	First Quarto (1603) of *Hamlet.*
Q 2	Second Quarto (1604).
Q 3	Third Quarto (1605).
Q 4	Fourth Quarto (1611).
Q 5	Fifth Quarto (undated).
Q 6	Sixth Quarto (1637).
Qq	The Quartos, except Q 1.

The parallel text of Q 1, Q 2, and F 1 may profitably be studied in Vietor's edition (*Shakespeare Reprints*, Marburg, 1891).

For the meaning of words not given in these notes, the student is referred to the Glossary at the end of the volume.

The numbering of the lines corresponds to that of the Globe edition. This applies also to the scenes in prose.

Dramatis Personæ. This list is not in the Qq or Ff. It was added by Rowe. The spelling adopted is that of F 1.

Division into Acts and Scenes. The division into acts and scenes is traditional, neither being given before the Players' Quarto of 1676, and in that only the acts. The earlier Quartos have no division, and in the Ff it extends only as far as Act ii, scene 2. Mr. Rose (*New Shakspere Society Transactions*, 1877–1879) has argued that the accepted division is incorrect; but it would not be convenient to adopt any other here. Mr. Rose's paper will, however, repay careful study. He would retain the present endings of Act i and Act iv. Act ii he would end with the present Act iii, scene 1, and Act iii with the present Act iv, scene 3. "Such an arrangement," he says, "is thor-

oughly Shakespearian; each act has its unity — the first is filled by the Ghost, the second by Hamlet's assumed madness and the king's attempts to fathom it, the third by the doings of one tremendous night; the fourth contains miscellaneous intermediate incidents, and the fifth ends all things."

ACT I — SCENE 1

Elsinore. A platform before the castle. Notes of locality are not given in the Qq and Ff; but Elsinore is mentioned in i. 2. 174 and ii. 2. 278, and the platform, or terrace, in i. 2. 252.

The two opening scenes put the spectator in full possession of the situation of affairs in Denmark. The death and character of the late king, his reappearance to denote some unknown evil, the threats of war, and the consequent need for strong men are emphasized in the first; the second adds the personal relations of Hamlet with the royal house, and depicts his state of mind at the beginning of the action. Coleridge has an excellent note on Shakespeare's first scenes:

"With the single exception of *Cymbeline*, they either place before us at one glance both the past and the future in some effect which implies the continuance and full agency of its cause, as in the feuds and party-spirit of the servants of the two houses in the first scene of *Romeo and Juliet;* or in the degrading passion for shows and public spectacles, and the overwhelming attachment for the newest successful war-chief in the Roman people, already become a populace, contrasted with the jealousy of the nobles in *Julius Cæsar;* — or they at once commence the action so as to excite a curiosity for the explanation in the following scenes, as in the storm of wind and waves, and the boatswain in *The Tempest*, instead of anticipating our curiosity, as in most other first scenes, and in too many other first acts; — or they act, by contrast of diction suited to the characters, at once to heighten the effect, and yet to give a naturalness to the language and rhythm of the principal personages, either in that of Prospero and Miranda by the appropriate lowness of the style, or, as in *King John*, by the equally appropriate stateliness of official harangues or narratives, so that the after blank verse seems to belong to the rank and quality of the speakers, and not to the poet; — or they strike at once the keynote and give the predominant

spirit of the play, as in the *Twelfth Night* and in *Macbeth;* — or finally, the first scene comprises all these advantages at once, as in *Hamlet*."

Horatio is carefully differentiated from Marcellus, Bernardo, and Francisco: they are unlettered soldiers; he is a scholar, and, as such, has his touches both of imagination and scepticism.

1. The scene opens amid nervous suspense; there is a tradition that it was written in a charnel-house. " 'Tis bitter cold," and silent, and the watcher is " sick at heart." On two previous nights the Ghost has appeared, to Bernardo and Marcellus. Bernardo's agitation shows itself in the way he challenges the guard, instead of waiting to be challenged.

6. ***upon***, immediately after. Cf. *Much Ado*, v. 1. 258, " And fled he is upon this villany," and Abbott, § 191.

13. ***rivals***. Q 1 has *partners*, but the sense is the same.

15. ***this ground***, the land of Denmark.

16. ***Give you***, probably an ellipsis for " God give you," rather than for " I give you."

19. ***A piece of him***; not merely a humorous answer, equivalent to " something like him." Horatio hints that although he is there in bodily presence, he is not in sympathy with his friend's expectation of seeing the Ghost.

21. This line is given to Horatio in Q 2, to Marcellus in Q 1 and F 1. In the one case the actor will speak of " this thing " with horror, in the other with derision.

31. ***assail your ears*** is followed somewhat irregularly by " what we have seen," because it is practically equivalent to " tell you." Cf. Abbott, § 252.

36. ***yond same star***, probably the Great Bear, which swings round the pole. Shakespeare's diction is unfettered by any laws beyond those of his free will. He says " this time last night " if he pleases, or he expands the same idea in a descriptive and allusive fashion. Similarly in lines 118–119 he paraphrases the moon as

" the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands."

42. ***a scholar***. Exorcisms were, of course, performed in Latin in the palindrome " Signa te signa, temere me tangis et angis." Cf. *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 264, " I would to God some scholar would conjure her."

44. ***harrows.*** So F 1. Q 1 has *horrors*, Q 2 *horrows*. Cf. Milton, *Comus*, 565, "Amaz'd I stood, harrowed with fear and grief."

Horatio's scepticism has vanished once for all before "the sensible and true avouch" of his own eyes. Hamlet's persistent doubts and questionings do not occur to him, though, indeed, he is inclined to explain the spirit as an "illusion" (l. 127).

46. ***usurp'st,*** in the wide sense of "usest without right," applicable equally to the "time of night" and the appearance of the king.

60–61. For the difficulty of time suggested by Horatio's reminiscence, and connected with that of Hamlet's age, see v. 1. 177, note.

62–63. The reading of Q 1, Q 2, F 1 is:

"when in an angry parle
He smote the sleaded (*sledded*, F 1) pollax on the ice."

The interpretation of the lines has puzzled commentators. There are two possible meanings: (1) We may read with Malone, *the sledded Polacks, i.e.* the Poles who ride in sledges. The form *Polack* occurs in ii. 2. 63, 75, iv. 4. 23, and v. 2. 387. "An angry parle" will then mean a skirmish, and the allusion will be to some war, not with the Norwegians, but with the Poles. (2) "The sledded poleaxe" may be a poleaxe weighted with a sledge or hammer at the back. I have preferred the second explanation for three reasons: (*a*) a "parle" or parley elsewhere in Shakespeare always means a conference; (*b*) a conference is more likely than a battle to take place "on the ice," *i.e.* on some bordering stream, which would be neutral ground; (*c*) Horatio saw the elder Hamlet only *once* (i. 2. 186), and presumably on a peaceful occasion, when his beaver was up, so that his appearance could be remembered; (*d*) the whole phrase suits best with some moment of sudden wrath, and not with a day's fighting. Moltke needlessly proposes to read *leaded, edged*, or *sledged poleaxe*.

65. ***jump.*** So Q 2. F 1 has the more commonplace *just*.

68. ***I.e.*** "speaking generally." "Some evil is portended," says Horatio, "though I know not precisely what."

70. ***Good,*** an appellative, "good sirs"; cf. Abbott, § 13.

72. ***toils,*** makes to toil. Shakespeare uses many verbs transitively, especially in a causal sense, which are now only used intransitively; cf. Abbott, §§ 290, 291.

85. *so*, *i.e.* as valiant; cf. *Macbeth*, i. 1. 16, "brave Macbeth — well he deserves that name."

87. *Well ratified by law and heraldry*, *i.e.* not only according to the civil law, but also according to the formalities of the court of chivalry. This court, a characteristic mediæval institution, took cognizance of matters of coat-armor or heraldry proper, and also, to some extent, of international law.

90. *a moiety competent*, an equivalent slice of territory.

96. *unapproved*, untried. Q 1 reads *inapproved*, Q 2 and F 1, *unimproved*, which might mean "unemployed," "not turned to account." Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, ii. 1. 159, "His means, if he improve them, may well stretch so far." But the idea of "mettle of proof" is common.

98. *list*. Q 1 reads *sight*, in the modern slang sense.

100. *hath a stomach in 't*, gives an opportunity for courage.

101. *our state*, our rulers.

108–125. These lines are not in F 1.

109. The meaning ascribed by the watchers to the coming of the Ghost shows that no suspicion of the king's murder had as yet been awaked in the court.

112. Horatio is not minimizing the importance of the apparition; it is a small thing, but it portends great trouble.

114. The prodigies in Rome are described in *Julius Cæsar*, i. 3. 70–71, where Cassius speaks of them as

> "instruments of fear and warning
> Unto some monstrous state."

The *Julius Cæsar* passage is taken from North's *Plutarch;* this in *Hamlet* comes perhaps partly from Lucan, *Pharsalia*, i. 526. Lucan mentions also the eclipse and the appearance of the dead in the streets. There are, however, good grounds for attributing the portents, both here and in *Julius Cæsar*, to some mediæval writing in doomsday literature. The Anglo-Norman version of the *Fifteen Signs of Judgment* affords a single origin for all but one of Shakespeare's phenomena. See *M. L. N.*, xxx, 41.

117. The connection of this line with the preceding is so abrupt that some editors have thought that ll. 121–125 should come between them. Others insert a conjectural line, as Boaden's *The heavens too spoke in silent prodigies*, or attempt to emend the text. *Disaster* here has its original meaning of

an ill-boding appearance in the stars; later it came to signify the ruin or misfortune itself.

119. The influence of the moon upon the tides is again alluded to in *The Winter's Tale*, i. 2. 426:

> " you may as well
> Forbid the sea for to obey the moon."

Either because of this influence, or because of the paleness of its radiance, especially as seen through clouds, Shakespeare frequently applies the epithet " watery " to the moon.

120. ***almost to doomsday.*** In the description of the second coming of the Son of Man, given in *St. Matthew*, xxiv. 29, it is prophesied that the sun shall " be darkened, and the moon not give her light." Cf. also *Revelation*, vi. 12, " the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood."

127. Crossing the spot where an apparition appeared was supposed to bring down its evil influence upon the rash spectator.

138. ***they say.*** Cf. ll. 149, 165. Horatio is a scholar and acquainted with theories of the supernatural. He knows the common causes that make spirits walk.

139. The stage directions, here and in l. 127, are from Q 2.

154. ***extravagant and erring.*** The Latin *extravagare* and *errare* both mean, in their radical sense, " to wander abroad." Shakespeare is fond of such uses, which seem to suggest a larger measure of Latin scholarship than he is usually credited with.

161. ***dare stir.*** So Q 2. F 1 has *can walk*, Q 1, *dare walk*.

162. Planets, when in their malignant aspect, were supposed to injure the incautious traveler by night; cf. *Coriolanus*, ii. 3. 117:

> " with a sudden reinforcement struck
> Corioli like a planet."

We still use the word " moonstruck "; see, *e.g.*, Robert Browning, *One Word More*, xvi.

163. ***takes.*** So Q 1, Q 2. F 1 has *talks*. " To *take* " is " to affect," " to charm." See Glossary.

165. Horatio is half attracted by the imaginative theory, half sceptical of it.

166. ***russet.*** The earliest color of dawn is not red but gray. Cf. *Much Ado*, v. 3. 25–27:

" the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey ";

and *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 5. 19, " I 'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye."

167. ***eastern.*** So F 1. Q 2 has *eastward*. A comparison between this beautiful metaphor and the cruder version given in Q 1 will show the subtle art with which Shakespeare carried out his revision of the play. Q 1 has:

" But see, the sun in russet mantle clad
Walks o'er the dew of yon high mountain top."

The art consists in the rearrangement of the alliteration so as to connect the words in a more melodious fashion.

170. Here occurs the first mention of Hamlet in the play, preparing us for the introduction of him in the next scene.

SCENE 2

Hamlet's brief dialogue with the King and Queen and his subsequent soliloquy sufficiently acquaint us with his mood. He has no idea of his uncle's crime, though he detests his character; but his moral sense has received a severe shock from his mother's marriage. The whole world appears to him, in consequence, under the dominion of evil; he would gladly be quit of it. But that cannot be, and, moreover, he cannot do anything, nor even utter his feelings. He must take refuge in irony and sarcasm, or, when possible, in silence.

Claudius is a hypocrite, but his hypocrisy is that of a statesman; he plays his part with a dignity and a keen insight into what is needful for the welfare of the state, which explains how the council came to choose him king.

The scene opens with a bridal procession. It is the custom of the stage for Hamlet to come on last, slowly and reluctantly, and clad in black, among the glittering draperies of the court.

The stage direction is that of F 1; Q 2 has *Enter Claudius King of Denmark, Gertrad the Queen, Counsaile as Polonius and his son Laertes, Hamlet cum aliis.* I believe that the curious phrase *Counsaile as Polonius* contains a trace of the name *Corambis*, which occurs in the stage direction of Q 1. If the name was somehow left in the MS. side by side with the sub-

stituted *Polonius*, the printer may have tried to make sense of it in his own way. Cf. note on ii. 1. 1, and Appendix A.

7. This line explains the *wisest* of l. 6.

11. ***an . . . a.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *one . . . one.* The F 1 reading rather strains the antithesis. But cf. *The Winter's Tale*, v. 2. 80, "She had one eye declined for the loss of her husband, another elevated that the oracle was fulfilled." For the idea, cf. the δακρυόεν γελάσασα (laughing tearfully) of Homer, *Iliad*, vi. 484. It is an oxymoron, which the grammarians describe as "a contrast by juxtaposition of opposing ideas." Shakespeare is fond of the conceit; a good instance is in *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 1. 182–187:

> "Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate!
> O any thing, of nothing first create!
> O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
> Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
> Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!
> Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is."

He burlesques it, however, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 1. 56.

17. ***that you know*** is parenthetical: "that which you already know."

18. ***a weak supposal of our worth***, a supposal that our worth is weak. Such transpositions of adjectives are common in Shakespeare; cf. *Macbeth*, ii. 1. 55, "Tarquin's ravishing strides."

21. His hope of gain is allied with his poor opinion of his adversary.

22. After a long parenthesis the foregoing subject is often recalled by a pronoun; cf. Abbott, § 242.

24. Cf. i. 1. 87.

25. Claudius mentions his brother three times in this carefully prepared speech, and always with an epithet of affection or flattery.

31. ***in that*** gives the grounds for Norway's interference.

32. ***proportions***, *i.e.* of the army, horse to foot, etc.

34. Q 1 has *Cornelia* and *Voltemar*.

38. ***delated.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *dilated*, Q 1 *related*. "Dilated articles" would mean "articles set out at large"; "delated articles" = "articles setting forth what powers are delated, delegated, or made over to you."

60. The metaphor is legal. Laertes' wish is like a will, illegal until the seal is affixed. Ll. 58–60, except the sentence "He hath, my Lord," are omitted in F 1.

62. *Take thy fair hour*, enjoy the privileges of youth.

65. Hamlet is now Claudius' son, and therefore in a closer relationship to him than that of a mere kinsman. But in feeling they are far from "kind" or "affectionate" toward each other.

66. *too much i' the sun.* Hamlet ironically replies that he is too much in the sunshine of the royal presence to be gloomy. There may also be a play of words between *sun* and *son:* "You call me your son, and so I am, a mere prince, who should be a king." Hamlet does not dwell on his loss of the crown, but it is one of the bitter drops in his cup; cf. v. 2. 65, "Popped in between the election and my hopes." "To be i' the sun" appears also to be a proverbial phrase for "to be miserable." Cf. *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 331: Beatrice says that everybody is getting married except her, "and I am sunburnt. I may sit in a corner and cry heigh-ho for a husband." *Sunburnt* obviously means "left out in the cold," "out of favor."

74. Hamlet's reply means, "it is common; but does it hurt the less?" The same idea is repeated in *The Tempest*, ii. 1. 3.:

> "Our hint of woe
> Is common; every day some sailor's wife,
> The masters of some merchant and the merchant
> Have just our theme of woe."

And still more exactly in Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, vi:

> "One writes, that 'Other friends remain,'
> That 'Loss is common to the race' —
> And common is the commonplace,
> And vacant chaff well meant for grain.
>
> "That loss is common would not make
> My own less bitter, rather more:
> Too common! Never morning wore
> To evening, but some heart did break."

78. *customary suits*, either "the conventional garb of mourning" or "the suits which I am accustomed to wear."

82. *moods*, less the inner feelings than the outward poses or attitudes of grief. Hamlet is contrasting the appearance

with the reality. Therefore the *shows* of F 1 is better than the *shapes* of Q 2.

92. ***obsequious sorrow***, in the double sense of " dutiful sorrow " and " sorrow as shown in obsequies, or funeral rites."

95. ***incorrect***; rather a participle than an adjective, referring more to the process than the result: " not corrected," " not trained into the right attitude."

97. ***unschool'd***. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, iii. 2. 161, " an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised." Shakespeare, like Milton, is fond of piling up negative adjectives in this way.

99. ***any the most vulgar thing to sense***. Cf. *Cymbeline*, i. 4. 65, " any the rarest "; *Henry VIII*, ii. 4. 48, " one the wisest "; and, for the transposition, Abbott, § 419*a*.

110. ***nobility***, apparently in the sense of " a high degree."

112. ***impart***, used intransitively, " impart myself," " offer myself." Several emendations have been suggested to avoid the intransitive use, the best being Mason's *Do I my part toward you*.

113. ***Wittenberg***. The university was founded in 1502. It was made famous by Martin Luther.

114. The subject is repeated in the pronoun; cf. l. 22, and Abbott, § 243.

117. ***cousin***, the usual term of courtesy used by a king to his nobles.

125. " The king's intemperance is very strongly impressed; everything that happens to him gives him occasion to drink " (Johnson). Additional solemnity is to be imparted to the present revel by the firing of salutes; cf. v. 2. 278 ff.

126. ***tell*** appears to be used intransitively for *speak*.

129. The idea of suicide, which occupies Hamlet's mind in iii. 1. 56 ff., has already occurred to him.

too too. Such reduplications have an intensive force, and are common in Elizabethan literature; cf. iii. 3. 8, and *Sonnet* cx, " Even to thy pure and most most loving breast."

solid. The contrast is with " dew," and therefore the use of the word here need not imply that Hamlet is fat; cf. v. 2. 271, note. But *too too solid* is only the reading of F 1. Q 2 has *too too sallied* and Q 1, *too much griev'd and sallied*. I incline to think that *sallied* is right, in the sense of " vexed "; cf. ii. 1. 39 (Q 2), and Wordsworth, *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*, vii, " fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses."

132. Cf. *Cymbeline*, iii. 4. 77:

" Against self-slaughter
There is a prohibition so divine
That cravens my weak hand."

It need hardly be said that there is nothing about self-slaughter in the Bible. " Unless it be the Sixth Commandment, the ' canon ' must be one of natural religion." (Bp. Wordsworth.)

134. ***uses***, the customary, usual occupations of life.

138. ***two months***, cf. iii. 2. 135.

140. Shakespeare, like Gray and Keats, accents Hypérion, instead of Hyperíon. Hyperion was the Titanic Sun-god; cf. iii. 4. 56.

149. ***Niobe***, a daughter of Tantalus, boasted that she had more sons and daughters than Leto. Consequently, Apollo and Artemis slew her children with arrows, and she herself was turned by Zeus into a stone upon Mount Sipylus in Lydia, where she sheds tears all the summer long; cf. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 823.

150. Q 1 has *devoid of reason*. ***Discourse*** is the Latin *discursus*, the process of the intellect from premises to conclusion in an argument.

154. ***unrighteous***, because her subsequent conduct gave them the lie.

158. ***nor it cannot***. The double negative is frequent in Shakespeare; cf. Abbott, § 406.

159. Hamlet does not speak of his mother's disgrace in public, nor, until the command of the Ghost is laid upon him, does he upbraid her in private.

160. The news of the apparition breaks in upon Hamlet's musings. It excites him, he eagerly questions concerning it, and jumps at once to the conclusion that there has been some foul play. This has not struck the others, but then Hamlet is ready to think the worst of his uncle.

161. Hamlet is full of thought when he first greets the newcomer, then he looks up, and recognizes his friend.

163. ***I 'll change . . . with you***; either, " I will be your servant, you my friend," or " I will call you, and you me, friend." Cf. l. 254.

167. ***Good even, sir***. This is spoken to Bernardo.

175. Satire; as soon as the surprise of seeing Horatio has worn off, the bitterness of Hamlet's heart rises to his lips. The reading is that of Q 1, F 1. Q 2 has *for to drink*.

182. ***my dearest foe.*** Shakespeare uses the epithet *dear* of anything that touches the emotions. See Glossary.

183. ***Or ever,*** before. See *Lear,* ii. 4. 288.

186. Horatio is about to say, as he says in l. 189, "I saw him yesternight." He breaks off nervously and substitutes "once." For that occasion, cf. note on i. 1. 60–63.

187. Cf. *Julius Cæsar,* v. 5. 73:

> "His life was gentle, and the elements
> So mixed in him that nature might stand up
> And say to all the world, 'This was a man!'"

190. ***who.*** Shakespeare often uses *who* for *whom;* cf. Abbott, § 274.

193. ***attent.*** In the transitional state of the language during the Elizabethan period, shortened forms of common words are frequently found. Cf. Abbott, § 22, and *avouch* (i. 1. 37).

198. ***the dead waste.*** Q 2, F 1 have *wast,* which may represent "waste" or "waist"; Q 1 has *vast.* Both *waste* and *vast* have the sense of "emptiness," "stillness." "The vast of night" occurs in *The Tempest,* i. 2. 327. "The waist of night" is found in Marston's *Malcontent.* "Waist" and "middle" would here be tautologous, but such tautologies are frequent in Shakespeare's exuberant vocabulary.

200. ***at point.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *at all points.* In either case the meaning is "completely." See Glossary.

202. ***slow and stately.*** Adjectives are often used for adverbs; cf. Abbott, § 1.

204. ***distill'd.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *bestilled.* "Distilled to jelly" is an odd phrase. To distil is properly to convert into drops (Lat. *stilla*) of liquid; here it seems to mean "softened," "weakened." Many emendations have been proposed, as, *be-chilled, dissolved, bethrilled.* It is no doubt the quaking of jelly that Shakespeare has in mind.

205. ***act,*** like the Latin *actus,* is here used of the patient rather than of the agent.

216. ***it.*** In Shakespeare's time *his* was just beginning to give place to *its* as the genitive of *it.* Transition forms are *it,* as here, and *it's. It* occurs about fourteen times in F 1. In the Authorized Version of the Bible, *his* is almost invariable, but *it* occurs in *Leviticus,* xxv. 5, "of it own accord." Cf. Abbott, § 228, and Craik, *English of Shakespeare,* p. 91.

222. ***writ down.*** So Q 2, F 1; Q 1 has *right done.*

226. I do not think that Hamlet's rapid questions imply any doubt of his friend's good faith. He is immensely impressed with the story, and curious to know every detail.

242. Cf. *Sonnet* xii. 4, "And sable curls all silvered o'er with white."

244. Hamlet professes to think the Ghost an "illusion," as Horatio did. But to himself he calls it "my father's spirit." The doubt comes back to him, however, and it is long before he can satisfy himself; cf. i. 4. 40; ii. 2. 627.

The belief that supernatural appearances were the work of evil spirits was common in Elizabethan times. In *Macbeth*, v. 8. 19, the witches are called "juggling fiends."

248. *tenable.* So Q 2; F 1 has *treble.*

254. Cf. l. 163.

SCENE 3

The principal elements in the situation of things at Elsinore have been put before us in the first two scenes: the need for a man of action, and the supernatural suggestion of some hidden evil in scene 1, the position and nature of Hamlet in scene 2. The present scene completes the picture by showing the contrast to Hamlet afforded by the family of Polonius, who may be taken as typical of the court at Elsinore. All are carefully drawn on a lower scale than his, shallow where he is subtle, commonplace where he is original. None the less, the portrait of the gentle maiden, Ophelia, is touched so as to win our sympathies. She is no mate for Hamlet; yet in her own sphere she is a beautiful and lovable character. Polonius is a politician without being a statesman, Laertes an apt representative of gilded youth as it existed at the court of Elizabeth. Both have low ideals: the father is consumed with the conceit of his own intellect and experience, which have shown him only the lower side of humanity; the son is "Italianate," degraded in tone by his life in a foreign city. Both are incredulous, not only of the purity and honor of Hamlet, but of that of Ophelia herself.

2. *as*, not "because," but "according as," "whensoever." Cf. Abbott, § 109.

6. *a toy in blood*, a passing fancy of youth. For the use of *toy*, cf. i. 4. 75, "toys of desperation."

12. The scriptural metaphor of the temple of the body recurs in *Macbeth*, ii. 3. 72:

" Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple."

21. ***safety.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *sanctity*. *Safety* must, of course, be scanned as a trisyllable; cf. Appendix G, 6 (3).

26. ***act and place.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *sect and force*.

36–39. These lines are enclosed in quotation marks in Q 2, perhaps because they are of the nature of maxims. Ll. 61–77 and some lines which take the place of Polonius' speech, 115 ff., are similarly printed in Q 1.

45. Laertes' advice is such as his own experience has taught him. Ophelia is somewhat impressed by her brother's worldly wisdom, yet she is not without an intimation of the shallowness of it.

50. Notice the change from the plural to the singular, characteristic of the loose Elizabethan syntax; and for the opposite construction, see iii. 2. 200. Cf. also Abbott, § 415.

the primrose path. Cf. *Macbeth*, ii. 3. 51, " Some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire "; and *All's Well*, iv. 5. 56, " the flowery way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire."

57. ***There.*** The natural explanation of the word is that Polonius lays his hand upon Laertes' head. But F 1 reads, *you are stayed for there*.

59. The precepts of Polonius may be summed up in the Greek μηδὲν ἄγαν, " Don't go too far; avoid excess; don't commit yourself." They are delivered in the formal, sententious way characteristic of the old man.

64. ***dull thy palm***, make thy friendliness too common.

65. ***comrade.*** So F 1; Q 1, Q 2 both read *courage*.

74. ***Are of a most select . . . in that.*** This line is a well-known crux. The following are the readings of the three earliest editions:

Q 1. *And they of France of the chiefe rancke and station*
Are of a most select and generall chiefe in that.
Q 2. *And they in Fraunce of the best ranck and station*
Or of a most select and generous chiefe in that.
F 1. *And they in France of the best ranck and station*
Are of a most select and generous cheff in that.

Evidently F 1 gives a nearer approach to a possible text than either of the Quartos. Moreover, it is shown by ll. 65 and

76 to afford a better version of this speech than Q 2. The principal explanations and emendations are:

(*a*) That given in the text, which is due to Collier. I think that the presence of *chiefe* in l. 73 (Q 1 text) may have led to the erroneous substitution of *chiefe* for *choice* in l. 74. When the play was revised the exact cause of the repetition may have been missed, *best* substituted for *chiefe* in l. 73, and the wrong word left in l. 74.

(*b*) *Chief* may be a substantive, meaning literally "head," and so "eminence" or "superiority."

(*c*) Both sense and scansion may be improved by reading, as the Cambridge editors suggest:

Are most select and generous, chief in that.

Staunton and Ingleby read *sheaf*, in the sense of "set," "clique," according to the euphuistic phrase, "gentlemen of the best sheaf," which occurs in Jonson's *Magnetic Lady*, Act iii, sc. 4. Ingleby also suggests that the *courage* of Q 1 and Q 2 in l. 65 is euphuistic for "a gallant."

76. ***loan.*** So F 1; Q 2 has *love.*

78. Polonius' last maxim appears so profoundly true, if taken in its highest sense of "Be true to your own ideal," that critics have doubted whether he is meant to be altogether ridiculous. But it must be remembered that the phrase may also be interpreted as "Look after yourself first, and you will find that honesty is the best policy." And it would be a characteristic bit of Shakespeare's irony to put into Polonius' mouth words that really convey a great meaning, but which he understands only in a far lower sense.

81. "May my blessing make my warnings the more acceptable."

88. Neither Polonius nor Laertes conceives that Hamlet may be genuinely in love with Ophelia. They interpret him after their own standard. And so Ophelia's ignorance is poisoned; she becomes ready to distrust her lover, and to take her father's part against him.

107. Polonius' delight in playing upon words is one evidence of his supreme satisfaction with himself, and especially with his powers of expression. Cf. ii. 2. 85 ff.

109. ***Running it.*** This is Collier's conjecture for the *Wrong it* of Q 2, and *Roaming it* of F 2. The phrase means "hunting it through every twist and turn, as a greyhound hunts a hare."

Pope's *Wronging it* is nearer to Q 2, but less pointed. Warburton's *Wringing it* is another possible alternative.

112. ***go to***, a common phrase of reproach, or, rarely, of encouragement. Cf. Abbott, § 185.

115. ***springes to catch woodcocks***, a proverbial phrase for the entangling of a simpleton. Cf. v. 2. 317. Harting states that the woodcock was supposed to have no brains. The Clarendon Press editors quote Gosson, *School of Abuse*, p. 72 (ed. Arber), " When Comedy comes upon the stage, Cupid sets up a springe for woodcocks, which are entangled ere they descry the line, and caught before they mistrust the snare."

116. ***prodigal***; adjective for adverb; cf. Abbott, § 1.

130. ***bonds***. This is the reading of the Qq and Ff, and there does not appear to be any reason to follow the majority of modern editors in accepting Theobald's emendation, *bawds*. *Bonds* means " marriage bonds."

131. ***This is for all***, once for all.

133. It is unnecessary to read *moment's* for the *moment* of Q 2 and F 1: for the use of *moment* as an adjective, cf. i. 5. 33, " Lethe wharf."

SCENE 4

The elements of the tragedy are now before the mind of the spectator; the revelation of the Ghost is the spark that sets them in motion. With this the first act, or prologue to the main action, naturally ends. Hamlet's problem is presented to him; the question is, " What will he make of it? " This must be decided in the course of the play by the laws of his character and circumstances. His first impulse is to believe and to revenge; yet, even so early as this, the hastily conceived design of simulating madness is a foretaste of what is to follow.

Scenes 4 and 5 are dramatically continuous; they are only separated scenically by the need for a slight change of locality.

1. ***it is***. So Qq, F 3, F 4; F 1, F 2 have *is it*.

8. Hamlet's speculative turn of mind is well illustrated in this passage. In the moment of nervous tension he finds a natural outlet in pursuing general reflections on an irrelevant matter, reflections that soon carry him into the deeps of philosophy.

9. ***the swaggering up-spring reels***. Pope and Johnson referred *up-spring* to Claudius, and interpreted it as " upstart " or " usurper." It is more probably an epithet of *reels*,

the whole expression being governed by *keeps*. Elze points out that the word corresponds to *hüpfauf*, a wild German dance. There is a passage in Dekker's *Gull's Horn-book* worth quoting: "Teach me, thou sovereign skinker, how to take the German's upsy freeze, the Danish rousa."

11. The kettledrum was a characteristically Danish instrument.

12. ***his pledge.*** Cf. scene 2, ll. 124 ff.

15. The English appear to have shared with the nations of northern Europe, in Shakespeare's time, a reputation for tippling. The drunkenness of the Germans is satirized in *The Merchant of Venice*, Act i, scene 2, and it appears from contemporary records that the Danes came under the same condemnation. Cf. Howell's *Letters*, i. 6. 2 (1632): "The king [Christian IV] feasted my lord [Leicester] once, and it lasted from eleven of the clock till towards the evening, during which time the king began thirty-five healths."

16. "A custom which it is more honorable to break than to observe."

18–37. These lines are omitted in F 1.

19. ***swinish phrase,*** phrase naming us swine.

24. There is some irony in putting into Hamlet's mouth a truth that his own history is so notably to illustrate. It is "by the o'ergrowth of some complexion," that is, his natural tendency to over-speculation, that he comes to failure.

32. ***nature's livery or fortune's star.*** Both phrases mean the same. The natural "livery," "temperament," or "complexion" of a man depends on the star under which he chanced to be born. Cf. *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 349, where Beatrice explains her lively nature, "Then there was a star dance, and under that was I born."

36–37. These lines have puzzled commentators more than any other in the play. Furness, in his *Variorum* edition, devotes six pages to criticism of them, and the Cambridge editors enumerate some forty readings. The Q 2 text is:

> *the dram of eale*
> *Doth all the noble substance of a doubt*
> *To his owne scandle.*

And the general sense is clearly that a small fault brings scandal upon the whole of a noble character, — a little leaven leavens the whole lump. But there can be little question that

the Q 2 text is corrupt, and the wildest attempts have been made to emend it. It is hardly necessary for the purposes of this edition to catalogue these. They may be found in Furness, or in the Cambridge edition.

No explanation appears to me plausible that does not retain the word *eale*. " A dram of eale " may mean:

(1) A dram of a decoction of eels; poison. Accounts of poisoning by eels, frogs, toads, and snakes are common in the popular ballads. In the ballad of *Lord Randal*, for example, the hero is poisoned by " eels boiled in broo."

(2) A dram of reproach. Mr. T. Davies states in *Notes and Queries* for March 11, 1876, that *eale* in the sense of " reproach " is still used in the western counties.

(3) Still more simply: a dram of e'il or evil. Very strong support is given to this interpretation by the Q 2 reading of *deale* for " devil " in ii. 2. 627.

Then for the next line. It is surely desirable to make the slightest possible change in the Q 2 text that will afford a reasonable sense. The choice appears to lie between three emendations:

(1) *Doth all the noble substance offer doubt,*
(2) *Doth all the noble substance oft adoubt.*
(3) *Doth all the noble substance often dout.*

In each case the meaning is the same, " The dram of evil brings doubt upon the whole noble substance, lowering it to its own scandalous level." The form *adoubt* would be parallel to " abase," the prefix giving it a causal sense. *Dout* would mean " do out," " do away with," " extinguish," as in iv. 7. 192:

> " I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
> But that this folly douts it."

In view of the uncertainty of the question it has been thought best to let the Q 2 reading stand in the text.

38. ***his***, the ordinary possessive form both of *he* and *it* in Shakespeare. Cf. note on i. 2. 216, and Abbott, § 228.

40. ***of health***, in opposition to " damned "; an angel or spirit from heaven.

43. ***questionable shape***, *i.e.* arousing obstinate questionings or problems in Hamlet's mind that must be answered.

47. ***canonized,*** not "sainted," but "buried according to the *canon* or ordinance of the church."

48. ***cerements.*** Q 1 has *ceremonies.*

49. ***inurn'd.*** So F 1; Q 2 has the more usual *interr'd.*

51–56. The construction is rather cramped. "What may this mean" is followed by (*a*) "that thou . . . revisit'st," and (*b*) "to shake our disposition." "We fools of nature" is explanatory of the "our."

54. ***fools of nature,*** the sport of nature.

71. ***his.*** Cf. note on l. 38.

73. ***your sovereignty of reason.*** Possibly "your sovereignty" may be a courtier's phrase, like "your highness"; but I think a clearer sense results from taking the whole phrase as equivalent to "reason, the sovereign quality in you." Cf. i. 2. 110, "nobility of love." In that case *deprive* is used in the rather exceptional sense of "destroy."

75–78. These lines are not in F 1. The idea is further developed in *King Lear,* iv. 6.

83. ***the Nemean lion,*** one of the mythical monsters slain by Hercules.

nerve. Elizabethan usage inverts the senses now given to nerve and sinew. See Glossary.

SCENE 5

2. ***My hour,*** *i.e.* the hour of cock-crow; cf. i. 1. 147 ff.

11. ***to fast in fires.*** *Fast* appears to be used here in the very general sense of undergoing penance. Various emendations have been suggested, such as, *to roast in fires; to waste in fires; to lasting fires.*

12. Cf. Vergil, *Æneid,* vi. 739:

> "Ergo exercentur pœnis, veterumque malorum
> Supplicia expandunt. Aliæ panduntur inanes
> Suspensæ ad ventos; aliis sub gurgite vasto
> Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni."

17. Cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* ii. 1. 153–154:

> "And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
> To hear the sea-maid's music."

19. ***an end.*** *A* or *an* often appears to be a dialectical form of *on.* See Glossary.

20. *the fretful porpentine.* The porpentine or porcupine was supposed to shoot out its quills, like arrows, when alarmed.

21. *eternal blazon,* revelation of the things belonging to eternity.

29–31. This is Hamlet's first impulse before the natural reaction of his character sets in. The speech is full of irony, considering the course the play is to take.

30. *meditation.* This does not seem to mean, as Warburton suggests, the mystical contemplation of God, or anything beyond "thought" in the ordinary sense. "As quick as thought" is a common enough phrase.

32. *the fat weed.* "If Shakespeare had any particular plant in mind, it must have been the asphodel, with its numerous bulbs, thick sown over the meadows of the lower regions" (Tschischwitz). But the image seems rather to have been suggested by the heavy growth of shapeless weeds on wooden piles rising and falling with the motion of the water.

33. *roots.* So Q 2; F 1 has *rots.*

Lethe; in Greek mythology, a river or lake in the infernal regions, whose waters gave forgetfulness of the past to those who drank. For the use of the substantive as an adjective, cf. i. 3. 133, note.

40. Cf. i. 2. 256, "I doubt some foul play."

42. Shakespeare does not fall into the error of making his villains obviously mean, after the fashion of melodrama. Unless they had the gifts and powers to accomplish their ends, their success would be unconvincing, and the whole motive of the play would appear hollow.

46. *seeming-virtuous.* As to the extent of Gertrude's guilt, see notes on iii. 4.

47. Cf. iii. 1. 53 ff., and the use of the same idea in Tennyson's *Locksley Hall:*

> "Is it well to wish thee happy? — having known
> me — to decline
> On a range of lower feelings and a narrower
> heart than mine!"

53. The natural order is "as virtue never will be moved." It is altered to bring out the antithesis of virtue and lust.

56. *sate.* So F 1; Q 2 has *sort.*

62. *cursed Hebona.* So Q 2; F 1 has *cursed hebenon.* Hebona is generally supposed to be henbane (*Hyoscyamus*

niger), which is a narcotic poison. Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* xxv. 4) states that the oil of it, dropped into the ears, stupefies the wits. On the other hand, Dr. Brinsley Nicholson (New Shak. Soc. *Transactions*, 1880–1882) argues that the plant meant is the yew. He shows that the name *ebenus* was applied to the yew; that Spenser's mention of "a heben bow" and "a heben lance" requires a tough wood, and that, though the properties of neither plant exactly correspond to Shakespeare's description, the yew was supposed to curdle the blood and so produce a kind of leprosy. Marlowe speaks of "the juice of hebon," but without showing which plant is meant. The *ebenus* or ebony is not poisonous.

63. Ambroise Paré, a surgeon, was suspected of having poured poison into the ear of Francis II while dressing it.

73. The imperfect line allows a sufficient pause for Hamlet and the audience to realize the horror of the situation.

75. ***dispatch'd,*** suddenly bereft.

76. Cf. iii. 3. 81.

77. ***disappointed.*** Shakespeare, like Milton, is fond of piling up these picturesque negative adjectives and participles. *Disappointed* is here used in its radical sense, "not made ready"; cf. note on i. 1. 154. Capell proposed to read *unappointed*, but the more varied rhythm appears preferable. Pope's *unanointed* has the additional defect of being identical in meaning with "unaneled," which, however, Pope interpreted as "without a knell being rung."

80. Many critics think that this line should be spoken by Hamlet, but all the Qq and Ff give it to the Ghost.

90. ***uneffectual,*** either because it is lost in the rays of the sun, or, more probably, because it is light without heat. Cf. Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller:* "The ostrich, the most burning-sighted bird of all others, insomuch as the female of them hatcheth not her eggs by covering them, but by the effectual rays of her eyes."

97. ***this distracted globe.*** It is the stage tradition for the actor to put his hand to his head at these words.

98. "Shakespeare alone could have produced the vow of Hamlet to make his memory a blank of all maxims and generalized truths, that 'observation had copied there,' — followed immediately by the speaker noting down the generalized fact, line 108" (Coleridge).

105. Hamlet, already revolted by his mother's marriage,

assumes, as indeed the Ghost appears to do in l. 85, that she had a share in the greater crime.

107. ***tables***, writing tablets of slate or ivory, often made in the form of a book, with clasps. They were perhaps covered with wax, and written on with a sharp-pointed instrument.

Hamlet's action is symbolical of the scholar and philosopher, not of the man of deeds.

112. I cannot help thinking that some of the rude humor in the latter part of this scene is a survival from the older play, and was retained to please the groundlings. It can, of course, be treated as having a dramatic value. It affords an outlet for Hamlet's excitement, and belongs to the exalted state of mind in which he conceives the idea of pretending madness. This scheme has plainly been formed by l. 171. The distribution of the speeches is that of Q 2; that of F 1 differs slightly.

116. Hamlet parodies Horatio's call by imitating that of a falconer to his hawk.

124. Hamlet is on the point of saying "but the king," when his heart fails him, and he ingeniously turns off the sentence.

136. ***Saint Patrick***, according to Moberly, the patron saint of blunders and confusion, and therefore fitly invoked when "the times were out of joint." Or he may be thought of as concerned with unexpiated crime. Cf. Dekker, *The Honest Whore*, "S. Patrick, you know, keeps Purgatory."

there is, not in Hamlet's words, but in Claudius' deeds.

138. ***an honest ghost***, not a devil in his father's shape, as both Horatio and himself have thought possible. Yet this very doubt recurs in ii. 2. 628.

148. Most European nations swore by the sword — in heathen times by the edge, in Christian, by the cross hilt.

156. ***Hic et ubique***. Shakespeare rarely introduces Latin words in ordinary dialogue, which makes it the more likely that this scene contains fragments of an older play. It must be remembered, however, that Latin was the proper language in which to address a ghost (cf. note on i. 1. 42). There is, perhaps, something conventional in the shift from place to place on the stage. It occurs in the miracle play of *Balaam*, suggested by the passage in *Numbers*, xxiii–xxiv. (See *M. L. N.*, xxviii. 40.) In Fletcher's *Woman's Prize*, v. iii, also, a man taking an oath shifts his ground. (Cf. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 413.)

167. ***our.*** So F 1; Q 2 has *your.*

174. One of the many lines that Shakespeare, as a practical playwright, leaves to be interpreted by the actor.

189–190. Hamlet's lurking sense of his own ineffectiveness bursts out in these lines.

The events of Act i are more or less continuous, from twelve o'clock on one night to dawn on the next. An interval follows, as to the length of which see note on ii. 2 *ad fin.*

ACT II — SCENE 1

Act i has been a sort of prologue; it contains the possibilities of which the remaining acts show the tragic development. As usual with Shakespeare, there is a crisis or turning-point at about the middle of the play, in the scene where Hamlet has a definite opportunity of killing the king and misses it (iii. 3). Up to that point we are concerned with the cause of the tragedy, the action and reaction of the Ghost's injunction and Hamlet's character upon each other, the puttings off, the assumed madness. After that follows the effect; the successive fatal consequences due to that one cause are unrolled before us.

The first part of scene 1 is important chiefly as showing us at once that a considerable interval has elapsed. Laertes has had time to reach Paris and make friends there. It leads up to the more important questions, What has become of Hamlet during the interval? Is Claudius dead yet?

The stage direction of the text is that of F 1. Q 2 has *Enter old Polonius with his man or two.* This is interesting, because the words *with his man or two* look like an attempt to make sense of the name *Montano,* which was apparently left in the MS. side by side with the substituted *Reynaldo.* Q 1 has *Enter Corambis and Montano.* Cf. i. 2. 1, note, and Appendix A.

7. ***Danskers.*** Danske is a common variant for Denmark.

10. ***encompassment and drift,*** roundabout and gradual course; cf. the phrase "to fetch a compass."

11. ***more nearer.*** The double comparative is not infrequent in Shakespeare; cf. iii. 2. 316; v. 2. 129. The thought is, "You will get nearer by indirect than direct questions." Polonius characteristically repeats this in other words in ll. 65–66.

17. The exactness and minuteness of Polonius' instructions

reveal another sign of his self-conceit. He will leave nothing to the common sense of his agent.

20. *forgeries*, in the general sense of "false attributions."

28–35. This speech shows at once the lowness of Polonius' moral tone and the futility of his intellect, with its love of nice and meaningless distinctions.

35. *Of general assault.* Dyce explains this as "common to all young men." But I think "a savageness . . . of general assault" may also mean "a passionate desire to assail all kinds of experience."

38. *a fetch of warrant.* So F 1; Q 2 has *a fetch of wit.* A warranted or approved device.

39. *sullies.* So F 1; Q 2 has *sallies.* Cf. note on i. 2. 129.

41. Here Polonius nods wisely, and beckons with his forefinger to fill up the line.

45. *in this consequence*, with such words as follow.

50. Polonius' memory is something senile.

59. Is there an allusion here to the famous quarrel on a tennis-court between Sir Philip Sidney and the Earl of Oxford?

64. *of reach* is explained by i. 4. 56, "thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls."

65. *assays of bias*, attempts that resemble the curved roundabout course of a bowl. See Glossary under *bias.*

68. *have me*, understand me.

71. *in yourself*, personally, as well as by the report of others.

73. "Let him go his own way without interference."

74. Hamlet has not yet accomplished his purpose of revenge. The assumption of madness gives him time to consider the subject on every side, and the process fascinates him. One element in the situation is his utter solitariness; he needs the help of spiritual sympathy if he is to brace himself to the required effort. But whence is it to come? He turns naturally to his love, Ophelia; yet he knows in his heart that she is not strong enough to give him what he wants. He makes one last attempt to disabuse himself of this impression, but her eyes only confirm it, and he reluctantly quits her forever.

85. Hamlet is already regarded in the court as mad; the only question is, — the cause. Polonius now jumps to the conclusion that it is love. The disorder of Hamlet's attire, which may have been due either to intention or to preoccupation, also presents itself as a symptom of love-sickness; cf. *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 297, "your hose should be ungartered, your

bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned, your shoe untied, and everything about you demonstrating a careless desolation."

102. *the very ecstasy*, the very madness.

103. *fordoes*, destroys. *For* has the negative sense of "to one's hurt," common in the German *ver*.

108. Cf. i. 3. 122.

114. This again must be taken as irony. Polonius falls into this error even while he comments on it; cf. note on i. 5. 98.

118–119. The expression is obscure. Probably Polonius is thinking of himself. His words seem to mean, "If I make Hamlet's love for my daughter known, it may bring dislike on me; but probably, on the whole, more trouble would come out of keeping it dark."

SCENE 2

This long scene contains two main dramatic motives. In the latter part of it, from the entry of the players, we get the gradual approach to that crisis of the action that is brought about by the play scene. The rest gives us, so to speak, a summary of the mental condition of Hamlet and of his attitude to the court during the months of delay. The points to notice are: (1) the assumption of madness, which deceives Gertrude, Ophelia, Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern, though the king, who has a better key to Hamlet's behavior than any of these, is not without his suspicions; (2) the delight which Hamlet takes in the opportunity thus afforded him of venting irony upon his enemies, and especially upon Polonius; (3) his invariable tendency to pass from the consideration of his own position into general satire and invective upon society. It is to be observed that Hamlet is not always acting the madman; he does so, for instance, with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern only when he begins to suspect their good faith. And further, the pretence is easy for him. It requires only a slight exaggeration of his natural self. His thoughts and feelings, especially under conditions of nervous excitement, are always on a plane hardly intelligible to ordinary men. To appear mad he has only to relax the control that he normally exerts.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Q 1 has *Rossencraft* and *Gilderstone*. The names are Danish; they occur as those of Danish students at Padua in 1587–1589 and 1603 respectively, and a Danish courtier called Rosencrantz attended the coronation of James I.

2. ***Moreover that***, besides the fact that; an unusual sense.

6. ***Since***. So F 1 here and in l. 13. Q 2 has the older form *Sith* in both cases.

11. ***of***, applied to time, frequently takes the place of *from*; cf. Abbott, § 167.

12. ***humour***. So F 1; Q 2 has *havior*.

34. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are utterly commonplace men. The interchange of their names here is a subtle hint of their nonentity. They have been friends of Hamlet, superficially (ll. 19, 228, 277), but they are not upon his ethical or intellectual level.

40. The introduction here of the Norway theme serves a double purpose. It marks the lapse of time since i. 2 (see note at end of this scene), and it again calls to our attention the need for a strong hand in Denmark, emphasized already in i. 1. This is done at intervals throughout the play.

42. The self-conceit of Polonius is equaled only by his effusive loyalty — to a usurper. ***still***, now as ever.

47. Polonius' statesmanship — a cunning both vulgar and shallow — is the point on which above all others he prides himself.

52. ***the fruit***. So Q 1; F 1 has *the news*, of which Hunter would make *the nuts*, in the sense of "It will be nuts to him"(!) The metaphor is only from the dessert, which comes *after* a feast.

56. ***the main***, the obvious dominant fact in her life and that of her son.

57. There is no sign here that Gertrude knows anything of the nature of King Hamlet's death.

61. ***Upon our first***, as soon as he had heard us.

67. ***borne in hand***, handled, treated; cf. *Macbeth*, iii. 1. 81, "How you were borne in hand."

73. ***three thousand***. So F 1; Q 2 has *three-score thousand*, but the F 1 reading is supported by the scansion and by Q 1.

81. ***more consider'd time***, time more fit for consideration. Passive participles are often used in senses that are not exactly passive; cf. Abbott, § 374.

90. Again the irony of making a man utter his own condemnation.

98. ***figure***, in the sense of rhetorical device.

109. This letter is no doubt a genuine love letter of Hamlet's, written before the opening of the play, and before Ophelia

had been instructed by her father to " repel his letters " (i. 3. 122; ii. 1. 109). The terminology of it is no sign of madness. Love letters have at all times been written in an exalted vein; with an Elizabethan this would naturally result in such affectations and conceits as the euphuists and Sir Philip Sidney had rendered popular. But to those who are not in love, love's language may well appear ridiculous or even insane. Cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 1. 7:

> " The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
> Are of an imagination all compact."

110. ***beautified***, a fantastic variant for beautiful; cf. Nashe's dedication of *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem* (1594), " To the most beautified lady, the Lady Elizabeth Carey."

111. It is one of Polonius' absurdities to fancy himself a connoisseur of literature and the drama. His is one of those character parts that gain incredibly by the voice and gesture of the actor.

113. " Women anciently had a pocket in the fore part of their stays, in which they not only carried love-letters and love-tokens, but even their money and their materials for needle-work " (Steevens).

123. ***this machine***, this earthly body.

135. ***table-book***, notebook, the " tables " of i. 5. 107. The idea is, " If I had kept their secret as closely as a desk or table-book would have kept letters intrusted to it."

139. ***round***, not " circuitously " but " directly," " straight out " — the common meaning of " roundly." Cf. *As You Like It*, v. 3. 11, " Shall we clap into 't roundly, without hawking or spitting or saying we are hoarse? "

141. ***out of thy star***. The idea is that persons in different ranks in life are under the influence of different stars, and therefore, like them, belong to different spheres; cf. *Twelfth Night*, ii. 5. 156, " in my stars I am above thee."

146–150. Considering that Hamlet was never mad, this chronicle of the stages of his malady is exquisite.

160. ***four hours***. This is the reading of all the Qq and Ff; at the same time I think that Hanmer's conjecture *for hours* is probably right.

167. The queen alone has sympathy for Hamlet, whether in his love (l. 114) or in his madness.

171. There is nothing corresponding to the remainder of

this scene in the same place in Q 1, but a good deal of the matter follows the scene that corresponds to our Act iii, sc. 1. Hamlet's dislike of Polonius is very marked; as the father of his beloved Ophelia, as the courtier of his uncle, as a man of the world, and as a fool, he is displeasing to the prince in every aspect.

174. *a fishmonger.* This taunt is purposely obscure, and conveys no meaning to Polonius. There are two possible explanations of what Hamlet may have intended by it. Coleridge gives one: "That is, you are sent to fish out my secret." Or "fishmonger" may be used in a sense which it appears sometimes to bear, of a seller of women's chastity. Here and in ll. 182 ff., Hamlet seems to suggest that Polonius would willingly market his daughter.

181. Hamlet is still harping on Ophelia, so his irrelevance is not so great as it appears. Just as life comes out of carrion, so is she the child of Polonius.

182. *a god kissing carrion.* Both Q 2 and F 1 read *a good kissing carrion;* the emendation is Warburton's. It may be justified by *1 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 113, "Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter?" and *Edward III* (1596):

> "The freshest summer's day doth sooner taint
> The loathed carrion that it seems to kiss."

If the reading of the Qq and Ff is retained, the interpretation must be, "If the sun can breed maggots of a dead dog, what will become of Ophelia?" She too is "good kissing carrion" (*i.e.* carrion good to kiss). "Therefore let her not walk i' the sun." Belief in impregnation by the sun, widespread among primitive peoples, has left a record in folk-tales and in literature. It is possible that Hamlet here means to warn Polonius against the King, who, he believes, is quite capable of seducing Ophelia. (See *M. L. N.*, xxxi, 117 and xxix, 1.)

185. *i' the sun*, in the sunshine of princely favors; cf. i. 2. 67.

195. There is no reason to find an allusion here to Juvenal, *Satire* x. 188, as translated by Sir John Beaumont, or to any book in particular. Hamlet is clearly extemporizing on Polonius' peculiarities.

215–216. The words *and suddenly . . . between him* are left out in Q 2; probably it is an accidental omission.

221. Hamlet's transitions from banter to seriousness are

frequent and pathetic. The effect, however, would be all the same upon his hearers.

244–274. These lines occur in F 1, but not in Q 2.

256. One of the startling sayings which make one feel that Shakespeare has sounded the heights and depths of all philosophies.

262. *bad dreams*, the vision of his father, forcing him out of his favorite life of imagination and philosophy into the uncongenial world of action.

270. *outstretched*. "Hamlet is thinking of the strutting stage heroes" (Delius).

Hamlet "cannot reason." The paradox he puts forward in this speech is not intended to suffer analysis.

276. *dreadfully attended*, not by his servants, but by his own "bad dreams."

277. *in the beaten way of friendship*, without ceremony, speaking as friend to friend.

280. Cf. i. 5. 185.

282. *too dear a halfpenny*, too dear at a halfpenny, valueless. For the omission of *at*, the Clarendon Press editors quote Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, 8875, "dere y-nough a jane"; and 12,723, "dere y-nough a leeke."

Hamlet has not been playing the madman up to this point. He is unfeignedly glad to see his friends, and takes pleasure in a wit-combat with them. Suddenly his suspicions are aroused, and are confirmed by their shuffling. He at once glides into an extravagance of speech that easily convinces them of his insanity.

304–323. There is nothing really mad in this speech of Hamlet's; it is the natural expression of his pessimistic mood. But to the unphilosophical mind — the plain man — all views of life that go in the least beneath the surface will appear insane.

322. Hamlet's thoughts are always returning to Ophelia.

329. *Lenten*. Lent being a fast, "lenten" is the reverse of joyous or festive.

332. Hamlet's love of the drama is characteristic of his literary temperament. Shakespeare uses this episode of the players to introduce a certain amount of — what is unusual with him — topical allusion to the fortunes of his company, and to vexed questions of dramatic controversy. We need not assume that all the literary criticism put in Hamlet's mouth represents Shakespeare's own opinions. It may rather be

that which would belong to the point of view of a scholar and courtier, such, for instance, as we find in Sir Philip Sidney's *Apologie for Poetrie.*

The players, however, are not merely incidental; they have a share in the working out of the plot. Their coming suggests to Hamlet a plan by which he may apply a crucial test to the king, and settle at once all doubts as to the Ghost's revelation.

335. ***the humorous man***, the character part of the piece. Cf. the title page of *Merry Wives*, Q 3 — *The Merry Wives of Windsor, with the humours of Sir John Falstaff.* Jonson's comedies, *Every Man in his Humour*, *Every Man out of his Humour*, etc., are full of such character studies.

337. ***tickle o' the sere.*** F 1 has *tickled a' th' sere.* The words *the clown . . . sere* are omitted in Q 2. The phrase occurs in Howard's *Defensative against the poison of supposed prophecies* (1620): "Discovering the moods and humours of the vulgar sort to be so loose and tickle of the sere." The meaning is pretty obvious, — "easily moved to laughter," — but how is it arrived at? Perhaps the metaphor is from a "sere" or "dry" throat, which is easily tickled. An ingenious explanation is given by Dr. Nicholson in *Notes and Queries* for July 22, 1871. A "sere" or "sear" is part of the mechanism of a trigger. Halliwell quotes in his *Archaic Dictionary* from Lombard (1596), "Even as a pistol that is ready charged and bent will fly off by and by, if a man do but touch the seare." Thus "tickle o' the sere" means "ready to go off at once," like a hair-trigger.

338. "The lady shall say her mind, even if she has to say more than is set down for her, and so spoils the blank verse."

343–347. On the "traveling," the "inhibition," the "innovation," see Introduction, p. x, and Appendix D.

352–379. These lines occur in F 1, but not in Q 2.

354–358. On "aery of children" and "berattling of the common stages," see Introduction, p. x, and Appendix D.

355–356. ***cry out . . . question.*** This is generally interpreted as "cry out in a high childish treble" or "cry out, dominating conversation." I believe it really means, "cry out on the burning question of the day, the question that is at the top, most prominent."

359. ***afraid of goose-quills***, afraid of being satirized.

363. ***the quality***, the profession of actors.

366. ***if their means are no better.*** This phrase seems to

support the belief that the profession of an actor was looked on with some contempt, even by literary men. Shakespeare is supposed to refer to this in *Sonnet* cxi:

" O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide
Than public means which public manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand," etc.

378. ***Hercules and his load***, perhaps an allusion to the sign of the Globe Theatre, Hercules bearing the world for Atlas.

380–385. Hamlet quotes the case of his uncle as another instance of the change of fashion. His choice of an illustration shows the preoccupation of his mind.

383–384. ***his picture in little.*** Does this mean a miniature, or his picture on a coin?

396. ***I am but mad north-north-west***, I am only mad when the wind is in one point of the compass, — only touched with madness.

397. ***a handsaw.*** So Q 2, F 1. Hanmer proposed *hernshaw*, or " heron," but the phrase as spelled in the text is proverbial. But very likely *handsaw* may be a corruption of *heronshaw*. Authorities on falconry say that the birds fly with the wind, and therefore, when it is from the south, the sportsman would have his back to the sun and be able to distinguish them without being dazzled. " Hawk," however, is said to be a name given to a kind of tool used by plasterers.

406–407. ***o' Monday morning.*** I do not think there is any special point to this phrase. Hamlet affects to be talking of indifferent matters, that Polonius may not think any attention has been paid to his approach.

410. Hamlet maliciously spoils the effect of Polonius' announcement by being the first to speak of actors.

412. ***Buz, buz*** ; according to Blackstone, an interjection used at Oxford, equivalent to " Stale news! "

414. *i.e.* " Have they come ' upon your honour ' ? Then your honour is — an ass."

416. A satire on the numerous subdivisions of the drama. The license given to the King's Company in 1603 entitles them " freely to use and exercise the art and faculty of playing Comedies, Tragedies, Histories, Enterludes, Moralls, Pastoralls, Stage plays, and such other like."

418–419. ***scene individable, or poem unlimited.*** Delius explains these as referring respectively to plays that observed and that disregarded the Unity of Place.

419–420. Seneca was the fashionable Latin model for tragedy, Plautus for comedy. Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* is based upon the *Menæchmi* of Plautus. A translation of this play by Warner appeared in 1595. All the plays of Seneca had been translated by 1581. *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy* is the title of an interesting book by Dr. J. Cunliffe.

420. ***Plautus.*** Q 1 has the curious reading *Plato.*

420–421. ***the law of writ and the liberty.*** This again means pieces written according to rules and without rules, " classical " and " romantic " dramas. Collier, however, explains it as " written and extemporized plays."

422. Jephthah had a daughter, and was ready to sacrifice her, as Polonius would Ophelia; cf. note on l. 174.

426. A ballad entitled *Jesphas Dowgther at his death* was entered on the Stationers' Register in 1567–1568, and another, or perhaps the same, entitled *Jepha Judge of Israel* in 1624. Various forms are in existence; in one the first stanza runs as follows:

> " I red that many years ago,
> When Jepha Judge of Israel,
> Had one fair daughter and no more,
> Whom he loved so passing well.
> And as by lot God wot,
> It came to pass so like it was,
> Great war there should be,
> And who should be the chief, but he, but he."

In 1602 a drama was written for Henslowe on the same subject by Dekker and Chettle.

438. ***the first row . . . chanson.*** So Q 2, and the reading is supported and explained by that of Q 1, *the first verse of the godly ballet.* F 1, however, has *Pons Chanson,* explained by Hunter as equivalent to *chanson du pont neuf,* " a popular ballad."

439. ***my abridgement,*** the players, who are " the abstract and brief chronicles of the time " (l. 548). But Hamlet may also mean that the coming of the players cuts short or abridges his discourse; or again, that they serve as an entertainment to

bridge or while away the time. Cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 1. 39, "Say, what abridgement have you for this evening?"

442. ***valanced***, with a beard. This is the Q 2 reading; F 1 has *valiant*.

445. It should be remembered that on the Elizabethan stage female parts were taken by boys.

448. ***cracked within the ring***. "There was a ring on the coin, within which the sovereign's head was placed; if the crack extended from the edge beyond this ring, the coin was rendered unfit for currency" (Douce).

450. The French appear to have had an unenviable reputation, as sportsmen, of pursuing all birds, and not only the nobler game.

454. ***me***, the ethical dative, introducing a person interested in the action of the verb; cf. ii. 1. 6, and Abbott, § 220.

457. ***caviare***, a Russian delicacy, made of sturgeons' roes.

The phrase may be illustrated by a quotation from Nicholas Breton's *The Courtier and the Countryman* (1597): "Another of the fine dishes . . . was a little barrel of caviary; which was no sooner opened and tasted, but quickly made up again, and was sent back with this message: 'Commend me to my good lady, and thank her honour, and tell her we have black soap enough already; but if it be any better thing, I beseech her ladyship to bestow it upon a better friend that can better tell how to use it.' Now if such be your fine dishes, I pray you let me alone with my country fare."

the general, the multitude.

459. ***in the top of mine***, with greater authority than mine.

460. ***well digested in the scenes***, the scenes carefully arranged to advance the plot.

461. ***modesty***, correctness, propriety, the opposite of extravagance, a common sense of the Latin *modestia*.

466–467. ***by very much more handsome than fine***, *i.e.* its beauty was not that of elaborate ornament, but that of order and proportion.

468. ***Æneas' tale to Dido***. There are many critical difficulties in understanding exactly what Shakespeare meant by this recitation episode; but they can only briefly be touched on here. To begin with, there can be no doubt that Hamlet, at least, does not quote the lines in irony; they are not, to him, mere burlesque. The speech that introduces them is clearly in-

tended for serious criticism, and, moreover, if they were burlesque, the point of the episode in leading up to Hamlet's comparison of himself with the player (ll. 576 ff.) would be dulled. Nevertheless, the lines as they stand do seem to me the most absolute burlesque. Compare them with the passage with which they were obviously meant to challenge comparison, the tale of Æneas to Dido in Marlowe and Nashe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, ii. 1. 214 ff. (Cf. Appendix E.) The work of the earlier writer is inflated enough, but surely Shakespeare, with his "coagulate gore" and his "eyes like carbuncles," excels him in bombast and extravagance. I am aware that this is not the view of all critics, and it is opposed to the high æsthetic authority of Coleridge, who writes: "The fancy that a burlesque was intended sinks below criticism; the lines, as epic narrative, are superb." Perhaps Schlegel's explanation is the true one, that the bombast is necessary to a play within a play. He says: "This extract must not be judged of by itself, but in connection with the place where it is introduced. To distinguish it as dramatic poetry in the play itself, it was necessary that it should rise above its dignified poetry in the same proportion that the theatrical elevation does above simple nature."

Or perhaps we must not confuse Shakespeare with Hamlet. The actor-playwright, the romanticist *par excellence*, may be gently satirizing the point of view of the university and court wit and scholar, with his "law of writ," his unities and classical models. But there are further difficulties in this explanation. It agrees well enough with the criticism which is put into Hamlet's mouth. The play is said to be characterized by order and proportion, "well digested in the scenes," free from irrelevancies and affectations, and therefore "caviare to the general." This is exactly what might be said of any "classical" play, such as *Ferrex and Porrex*. But when we come to the speech itself, all this is forgotten. The style is that of an early turgid romantic play, full of affectations, and indeed the play of *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, which it imitates, is essentially romantic and not classical in character. So that it is impossible to say that any quite satisfactory solution of the difficulty has been arrived at.

472. ***the Hyrcanian beast***, the tiger; an obvious reference to Virgil, *Æneid*, iv. 266:

> "duris genuit te cautibus horrens
> Caucasus, Hyrcanæque admôrunt ubera tigres."

492. ***Rebellious to his arm.*** Does this explain the sense of *Macbeth*, i. 2. 56, " Point against point rebellious "?

495. This line affords the nearest verbal parallel between this passage and the corresponding one in *Dido, Queen of Carthage;* cf. that play, ii. 1. 254:

> " Which he disdaining, whisked his sword about,
> And with the wind thereof the king fell down."

496. The last three lines are represented by a blank in Q 2.

502. ***a painted tyrant***, a tyrant in a picture.

503. " Indifferent to his own will and the matter he had in hand."

517. ***fellies.*** Q 2 has *follies*, F 1 *fallies.*

522. ***a jig***, a humorous performance by a clown, given after the fall of the curtain. It included music, dancing, and coarse humor, and probably resembled some of the " turns " at a modern music hall more than anything else. The titles of jigs by Kempe and others occur in the Stationers' Registers.

525, 526. ***mobled.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *inobled.*

527. Polonius is rather bored, but he thinks it well to interpolate a criticism, in order to keep up his character as a judge of literature. The criticism is rather an unfortunate one, however.

531. ***o'er-teemed***, worn out with bearing children.

540. Dryden did not know that " milch " meant simply " moist," and wrote of this passage in the preface to his *Troilus and Cressida;* " His making milch the burning eyes of heaven was a pretty tolerable flight too; and I think no man ever drew milk out of eyes before him."

541. ***passion***, like *milch*, is governed by *made.*

549. Cf. note on l. 439.

550. This line, like l. 359, appears to show that personal satire was a prominent feature of the Elizabethan stage.

566. ***a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines.*** There is a mare's-nest controversy on these lines in the *Transactions* of the New Shakspere Society for 1874. I have no doubt that they are to be found in Lucianus' speech (iii. 2. 266 ff.). They are interrupted by the king's sudden rising. Others think that they are to be found in the Player King's speech (iii. 2. 196 ff.), because this speech is philosophical and therefore characteristic of Hamlet. But the only object of altering the play would be to introduce a scene exactly parallel to Claudius' crime.

570. The suggestion that the player could refrain from mocking Polonius only out of courtesy to Hamlet is delicious.

576. Hamlet has been smitten by the player's emotion, obvious even to Polonius (l. 542), into a consciousness of his own weakness. As a student of the drama, he is aware of the profound influence of acting upon the minds of the spectators. Hitherto he has been, so he thinks, deterred from action by doubts as to the genuineness of the Ghost. Now he makes the play, altered for the purpose, a test of the king's guilt, — and then, no more hesitation.

580. *wann'd.* So Q 2; F 1 has *warm'd.*

584. The pauses in this speech (cf. ll. 593, 603, 610, 616) are filled up by intervals of meditation.

595. *John-a-dreams.* The word recurs in Armin's *Nest of Ninnies* (1608): "His name is John, indeed, says the cynic; but neither John-a-nods, nor John-a-dreams, yet either as you take it." It means a sleepy, apathetic person.

601. Cf. *Richard II*, i. 1. 44, "With a foul traitor's name stuff I thy throat"; and *ibid.* i. 1. 124.

> "as low as to thy heart,
> through the false passage of thy throat, thou liest."

605. For the belief that pigeons were gentle because they had no gall, cf. Drayton, *Eclogue* lx:

> "a milk-white dove
> About whose neck was in a collar wrought,
> Only like me my mistress hath no gall."

617. *About*, about it, to business.

627. This was a common explanation of the supernatural. It is that put forward in James the First's *Demonologie*, and is found also in Sir T. Browne's *Religio Medici:* "I believe . . . that these apparitions and ghosts of departed persons are not the wandering souls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and suggesting unto us murder blood and villainy, instilling and stealing into our hearts, that the blessed spirits are not at rest in their graves, but wander solicitous of the affairs of the world."

631. *such spirits*, such humors, as melancholy.

633. *More relative*, more closely related, more definite.

this, *i.e.* the story of the Ghost. Hamlet has taken out his

tablets to compose the " dozen or sixteen lines "; in these same tablets he has written his note after the Ghost's departure (i. 5. 109), and he now taps them significantly. He is happy at this moment, for he can put off his whole problem, with a good conscience, until the result of his congenial device is made clear.

An interval of at least a month has elapsed between Acts i and ii. There has been time for Laertes to reach France and want fresh supplies (ii. 1. 1), for the ambassadors to return from Norway (ii. 2. 40), for Hamlet's reputation for madness to be established, and for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to be sent for (ii. 2. 3). Cf. also iii. 2. 136 and note *ad loc.* with i. 2. 147. From the beginning of Act ii the action is fairly continuous to the end of Act iv, sc. 3. Act iii, sc. 2 is on the " morrow night " following Act ii, sc. 2 (see l. 563), and Act iii, sc. 1 is doubtless on the morrow morning. It will be remembered that Mr. Rose has shown reason for supposing that Act iii, sc. 1 is really part of Act ii.

ACT III — SCENE 1

This short scene sums up the precise situation of affairs at the moment when the crisis is coming on. There are three points to be noticed:

(1) Hamlet has resolved to make the play the solution of all his doubts; if that test shows the king guilty, he shall die. Even as he forms this determination, his heart fails him. He turns to an alternative which has dimly presented itself before (i. 2. 132), and deliberately considers the desirability of suicide. But such a way out of the difficulty is too simple, too easy for his over-speculative nature. He sees the future filled with countless possibilities, which puzzle his will, and this enterprise also loses the name of action.

(2) Hamlet has long known that no help is to be had from Ophelia. Yet when she appears before him, his old tenderness revives. He speaks gently to her, and then — discovers that she is deceiving him, acting as a decoy for Polonius. This obliges him to play the madman again, and his paradoxes express a feeling of revulsion from the poor foolish girl. His mother's sin has already made him lose faith in womanhood, and now he sees Ophelia, too, spotted with all the vileness of her sex. He assails her with reproaches so inappropriate to herself that she can only take them as the sign of a shattered mind.

(3) With Polonius and the like Hamlet's acting is successful; but the king is shrewder. His suspicions are awakened, and he at once plots to get his nephew out of the way. Hamlet has, therefore, gone too far on the path of delay, and though he does not know it, the opportunities of revenge are fast slipping away from him.

1. ***drift of circumstance,*** roundabout methods; cf. i. 5. 127; ii. 1. 10.

5. Cf. ii. 2. 304–323.

13. This hardly appears to give a fair account of what really took place, unless indeed we accept Clarke's somewhat strained interpretation, "He was sparing in speech when we questioned him; but of demands respecting ourselves he was very free in return." Warburton proposed to read:

> "Most free in question, but of our demands
> Niggard in his reply."

32. ***lawful espials.*** This phrase is not found in Q 2.

43. Polonius and the king hide behind an arras. The book given to Ophelia is doubtless a prayer-book; cf. the following lines and the word "orisons" in line 89.

46. Here again the truth of Polonius' words affords an ironical contrast to the meanness of his actions.

49. This speech is the first hint of any sting of conscience in Claudius; cf. Act iii, sc. 3.

52. ***the thing that helps it,*** the waiting-maid. Cf. the well-known saying, "No man is a hero to his *valet-de-chambre.*"

57–60. Ll. 57–58 expand the idea "to be," ll. 59–60 of "not to be." Hamlet may propose to take arms either by attacking the king and so exposing himself to probable death, or, more likely, by killing himself. The metaphor contained in "take arms against a sea of troubles" has been criticized as being confused and absurd; but the difficulty, if there is any, disappears when it is shown that there is an allusion to a custom attributed to the Celts by many classical writers. Shakespeare may have read of it in Aristotle or Strabo or Nicolas Damascenus, but most probably in Abraham Fleming's translation of Ælian's *Histories* (1576), Book xii: "Some of them are so bold, or rather desperate, that they throw themselves into the foaming floods with their swords drawn in their hands, and shaking their javelins, as though they were of force and violence to withstand the rough waves, to resist the strength

of the stream, and to make the floods afraid lest they should be wounded with their weapons."

61. ***to say.*** Bailey objected to these words as breaking the sense, and proposed *straightway.* But I think they are meant as a hint that death is not the real end.

67. ***this mortal coil.*** *Coil* generally means " turmoil " (see Glossary); but it is often explained here as " body," and the phrase is compared to *The Merchant of Venice,* v. 1. 64, " this muddy vesture of decay," and to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Bonduca,* iv. 4, " the case of flesh." The body is conceived of as wound round the soul like a coil of rope.

69. ***of so long life,*** so long lived.

70. ***the whips and scorns of time,*** *i.e.* of the temporal world. In Armin's *Nest of Ninnies* (1608) occurs the phrase, " there are, as Hamlet says, things called whips in store." If the reference is to Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* it may either be a misquotation of this passage, or it may preserve a reading not found in any of the Qq and Ff. But of course the reference may be to the older *Hamlet.*

76. ***a bare bodkin.*** The sense is probably " a mere bodkin," rather than " an unsheathed bodkin."

80. ***No traveller returns.*** " Then how about the Ghost? " asked Theobald; to which Coleridge replied, " If it be necessary to remove the apparent contradiction — if it be not rather a great beauty — surely it were easy to say that no traveller returns to this world as to his home or abiding place."

83. ***conscience,*** the exercise of conscious thought, speculation on the future. This speech is not merely ironical. Hamlet has become aware of the flaw in his own character, though he attributes it to humanity in general.

86. ***pitch.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *pith* (cf. i. 4. 22, " pith and marrow "). *Pitch* is " height," the metaphor being from falconry.

96. " I may have given you love tokens, but never my life, my very self."

103. At this moment Hamlet hears a rustle behind the arras and immediately suspects Ophelia's good faith. His " Ha, ha! " is doubtless to be read as " Ah, ha! " — an exclamation of triumphant contempt or surprised discovery, as in i. 5. 150: " Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, truepenny? " (Cf. *M. L. N.,* xxviii, 40 and 227.) Hamlet begins to speak cynically out of the disbelief in women which his mother has now taught him. For the antithesis between *honest* and *fair,* cf. the

dialogue between Touchstone and Audrey in *As You Like It*, iii. 3.

119. ***inoculate.*** The metaphor is, of course, from gardening; see Glossary.

120. ***of it,*** of our old stock.

122. Hamlet again becomes tender to Ophelia; he tries by self-accusation to persuade her that his love was little loss. He is not entirely insincere; he feels that those evil tendencies are really dormant in him, though they will very likely never come into action. He is "crawling between earth and heaven," without the strength to take definitely the way either of good or of evil. And, as often in the crises of life, he feels compelled to confess what is worst in him. Cf. the self-accusations of Malcolm in *Macbeth*, iv. 3.

132–133. Hamlet suddenly determines to test Ophelia by the question, "Where 's your father?" She lies to him, and he then bursts into a partly genuine, partly assumed extravagance of invective against womankind, unfairly enough applying it all to her.

142. ***Get thee to a nunnery,*** *i.e.* "breed no children." In l. 122 the implied reason was the wickedness of man; now it is the falseness of woman.

148. ***paintings . . . face.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *prattlings . . . pace*. L. 51 supports the Q 2 reading. Cf. also *The Merchant of Venice*, iii. 2. 88 ff.:

> "Look on beauty
> And you shall see 't is purchased by the weight."

151. Hamlet is satirizing various forms of feminine affectation or unreality — the painted face, the affected speech and walk, the use of dubious words in pretended innocence. What particular affectation is meant by "nick-name God's creatures"? Perhaps it is such discourse as that of Beatrice to Benedick in the first scene of *Much Ado*, mere superficial raillery, covering other feelings.

155. ***all but one.*** Claudius is the one.

157. Ophelia sinks down in a chair, her face buried in her hands. Just as Hamlet is leaving the stage, he turns around, gently approaches her, raises a lock of her hair, and presses it to his lips, before he finally goes. — So Tree played the part, and Kean used some similar action.

161. ***mould of form,*** model on which all formed themselves.

167. ***blown***, in full blossom.

171. The double negative is common in Shakespeare and Elizabethan writers generally. Cf. Abbott, § 406.

175. ***for to***. When *to* lost its prepositional force and became merely the sign of the infinitive, *for* was added to strengthen the sense of motion or purpose. Cf. Abbott, § 152.

178. ***tribute***. Æthelred the Unready (994) began the practice of buying off the Danish invaders of England. Hence arose the tax known as Danegelt, which was levied long after the invasions had ceased, though it was no longer paid to the Danes.

184–186. Polonius still sticks to his own theory.

192. Eavesdropping appears to be Polonius' one conception of statesmanship.

SCENE 2

This important scene finally convinces Hamlet of the king's guilt; it closes with a resolution to "do bitter business." Hamlet is throughout in a state of extreme nervous tension; at the success of his plot he breaks into the wildest excitement. Hence the nonsense he talks to Ophelia, and his riotous fooling with the courtiers. The episodes with the players and Horatio serve partly as a quiet opening to the turbulent emotions of the play scene, partly to show that Hamlet's action is fundamentally sane and rational. It is characteristic of him to be able to interest himself at such a critical moment in the niceties of the actor's art.

1. The effectiveness of restraint, of the middle course between ranting and tameness — that is the gist of Hamlet's counsel.

10. Cf. *Every Woman in her Humour* (1609): "As none wear hoods but monks and ladies, and feathers but forehorses . . . none periwigs but players and pictures."

12. ***the groundlings***, the inferior part of the audience, who paid a penny for standing room in the yard or "pit" of the theatre. Cf. Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, Induction, "The understanding gentlemen of the ground here asked my judgment."

15. ***Termagant***, supposed to be a god of the Saracens, a boisterous character often represented in the mysteries. Cf. *Guy of Warwick*, where the Sultan says:

> "So help me Mahoun of might
> And Termagaunt my god so bright";

and Bale, *Acts of English Votaries* (*Reliques*, i. 77), "Grennyng upon her lyke Termagauntas in a play." In *1 Henry IV*, v. 4. 114, the word is used as an adjective, "that hot termagant Scot." Skeat derives it from the Ital. *Trivigante*, the moon who wanders (Lat. *vagari*) through the heavens in a threefold aspect (Lat. *ter*), as Hecate, Selene, Artemis.

16. ***Herod***, another common character in the mysteries. It was traditionally played with as much noise and rant as possible. Cf. the stage direction in the Coventry play of *The Nativity*, "Here Erode ragis in thys pagond, and in the strete also." In the Chester play of *The Slaughter of the Innocents* (ed. Shak. Soc., p. 153) he is made to say:

> "For I am kinge of all mankinde,
> I byde, I beate, I lose, I bynde,
> I maister the moone, take this in mynde,
> That I am moste of mighte,
> I am the greatest above degree,
> That is, that was, that ever shalbe."

Chaucer (*Miller's Tale*, 3384) says of the parish clerk, Absolon. "He pleyeth Herodes up on a scaffold hye."

24. The saying that the stage should hold the mirror up to nature should be taken strictly in accordance with the context. It is not a pronouncement in favor of realism on the stage, but only a plea for naturalness of gesture and speech in acting.

50. The following lines are inserted here in Q 1. There is nothing corresponding to them in Q 2 or F 1:

> "And then you have some again, that keeps one suit
> Of jests, as a man is known by one suit of
> Apparell, and gentlemen quotes his jests down
> In their tables, before they come to the play, as thus:
> 'Cannot you stay till I eat my porridge?' and, 'You owe me
> A quarter's wages,'; and, 'My coat wants a cullison';
> And, 'Your beer is sour'; and blabbering with his lips,
> And thus keeping in his cinque-pace of jests,
> When, God knows, the warm Clown cannot make a jest
> Unless by chance, as the blind man catches a hare;
> Masters! tell him of it."

It seems to have been the common practice of the clowns to insert "gag" in their parts, like a modern actor of Gaiety

burlesque. Stowe praises the "extemporal wit" of Thomas Wilson and Richard Tarlton. It has been suggested that the passage in Q 1 was aimed especially at the famous comic actor, William Kempe, who probably acted the serving-men of Shakespeare's earlier comedies. He appears to have left the Chamberlain's company in 1599, but in 1602 he had returned to it, and this may well explain the omission of the passage in Q 2 and F 1. Cf. Introduction, page x.

59–60. Hamlet's admiration for Horatio, a man of such opposite character to himself, is very natural. Apparently he has confided in him to some extent, though probably Horatio was hardly capable of fully understanding or helping Hamlet in his difficulties.

66. ***pregnant,*** because the fawning courtesy may lead to "thrift" or "profit."

74. "According to the doctrine of the four humours, desire and confidence were seated in the blood, and judgment in the phlegm, and the due mixture of the humours made a perfect character" (Johnson).

75. Doubtless Hamlet recurs to the idea suggested here in the episode of the recorders.

81. ***One scene,*** the "dozen or sixteen lines" of ii. 2. 566. See note *ad loc.*

84. *I.e.* "make a mental note of every action."

95. ***idle.*** If this really means "mad," it is a pretty clear proof that the madness is assumed.

98. ***the chameleon's dish.*** Cf. *Two Gentlemen of Verona,* ii. 1. 178, "Though the chameleon Love can feed on the air"; and Sir T. Browne, *Pseudodoxia Epidemica,* iii. xx, "Concerning the chameleon, there generally passeth an opinion that it liveth only upon air, and is sustained by no other aliment."

99. ***promise crammed.*** Claudius has promised Hamlet that he shall be his "son," when he should be king (i. 2. 64); and Hamlet has promised to slay Claudius, but he does not do it.

102. ***are not mine,*** do not refer to my question.

108. ***Julius Cæsar.*** There are numerous records of performances of plays, in both Latin and English, in the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. In 1607, *Cæsar and Pompey* or *Cæsar's Revenge* was acted at Trinity, Oxford; this was in English. A Latin play on Cæsar's death was acted at Christ Church in 1582. It will be remembered that Shakespeare's

own *Julius Cæsar* appeared about 1601, the probable date of the first version of *Hamlet*.

109. ***i' the Capitol.*** The murder of Cæsar actually took place in the Theatre of Pompey, which stood in the Campus Martius. Here, as in *Julius Cæsar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare transfers the scene of it to the Capitol.

132. Hamlet means that "your only jig-maker" is what would have been expected to cause sorrow, the death of a husband and father.

136. ***two months.*** In i. 2. 138 it was "not two," and in i. 2. 153 the marriage of Claudius and Gertrude was said to have taken place "within a month." This leaves about a month for the interval between Acts i and ii. Cf. ii. 2, note, *ad fin.*

138. ***I 'll have a suit of sables.*** The obvious sense is, "I 'll give up mourning, throw off my inky cloak." But *sable* certainly means, as a rule, black. Probably the meaning here is "robes trimmed with the fur of sables," which were sumptuous and expensive, and not regarded as mourning. Others take the word as equivalent to the French *isabelle* or flame-color.

144–145. Apparently this is a line from a ballad. It is again quoted in *Love's Labour 's Lost*, iii. 1. 30. The "hobby-horse" was a character in the May games and morris dances. It was represented by a man astride upon a stick with a horse's head on it. It appears to have been suppressed at the Reformation, and to this fact the ballad probably referred.

145. It was common for the action of a play to be briefly represented in dumb-show at the beginning, not, however, on the English stage, but on that of Denmark. Hunter quotes a description of such a performance given by Danish soldiers in 1688, from the diary of Abraham de la Pryme. It would seem, however, that in this case the device rather gives away Hamlet's design to surprise the king. The dumb-show must have prepared him for what followed.

147. ***miching mallecho,*** secret mischief (see Glossary), in a double sense of the poisoner's crime, and of Hamlet's own secret plot. There is a similar *double entendre* in the use of the title "The Mouse-trap" (l. 247).

165. Here, at least, whatever may have been his purpose in Act ii, sc. 2, Shakespeare imitates the cruder style of the earlier English tragic drama. Both the rhymes and the stilted language are characteristic thereof. Cf. the labored periphrases

by which ll. 165–168 express the fact that thirty years have passed, with Shakespeare's own parallel phrase in i. 1. 36.

175. ***distrust you***, am distrustful for you; cf. i. 3. 51, " fear me not."

177. ***holds quantity***, are proportionate to each other. For the use of a singular verb with a double substantive, cf. Abbott, § 336.

178. " They have naught either of fear or love, nor they have both in extremity."

240. Note the irony of putting this in the Queen's mouth.

249. ***Vienna.*** Q 1 has *Guyana.*

Gonzago. In Q 1 the name is given as *Albertus.* Moreover, in Q 1 Albertus and Baptista are throughout called *Duke* and *Duchess;* in Q 2, except for this line, they are always *King* and *Queen.* The retention of the titles of Q 1, even in one place only, betrays that a change has been made.

253. A proverbial expression, found in Lyly, and in *Damon and Pythias* (1582), " I know the gall'd horse will soonest wince."

255. ***a chorus.*** In *The Winter's Tale, Romeo and Juliet, Henry V,* a chorus is introduced to explain the progress of the action.

257. ***the puppets***, the He and She, the actors in the comedy of love. At puppet shows or " motion," as in the modern Punch and Judy show, the dialogue was spoken by some one on or behind the stage. Cf. *Two Gentlemen of Verona,* ii. 1. 100, " O excellent motion! O exceeding puppet! Now will he interpret to her." So Greene, in his *Groatsworth of Wit,* says of himself, " It was I that . . . for seven years' space was absolute interpreter of the puppets." And Nashe, in his *Pierce Pennilesse,* says, " the puling accent of her voice is like a feigned treble, or one's voice that interprets to the puppets." Hamlet wantonly insults Ophelia with cynical talk of love.

262. ***mistake***, *i.e.* take amiss. So Q 2, F 1, with an obvious reference to the marriage service. Many editors adopt Pope's *must take.*

265. Cf. *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third* (p. 61, Shak. Soc. reprint):

> " The screeking raven sits croaking for revenge,
> Whole herds of beasts come bellowing for revenge."

266–271. This speech is doubtless Hamlet's " dozen or sixteen lines "; cf. note on ii. 2. 566.

268. *midnight weeds.* Cf. iv. 7. 143, and *Macbeth*, iv. 1. 25, "Root of hemlock digged i' the dark."

269. *Hecate*, or Diana in her aspect as an infernal goddess, was regarded in the Middle Ages as the queen of witches.

274. No such Italian form of the story can be identified.

277. This line is omitted in Q 2, probably by accident, as it occurs in Q 1. As Tree played the part, Hamlet's excitement increases during the delivery of Lucianus' — Hamlet's own — speech. He creeps across the floor of the hall, muttering the words from a written paper, and, as the King rises, he leaps up wildly, tears the paper, and scatters the fragments in the air.

282. In the rest of the scene, Hamlet indulges the excitement that he has held pent up during the play. But his elation is, at any rate at first, less at knowing the truth than at the artistic success of his dramatic venture. The source of Hamlet's quatrain is unknown, if it is a quotation at all.

go weep. Cf. the passage on Jaques and the weeping deer in *As You Like It*, ii. 1.

286. *this*, this specimen of play writing.

287. *turn Turk*, go to the bad; the phrase recurs in *Much Ado*, iii. 4. 57. Cf. Cooke, *Greene's Tu Quoque* (1614), "This it is to turn Turk, from an absolute and most complete gentleman, to a most absurd and ridiculous lover."

288. *Provincial roses*, the double damask rose, Gerard's *Rosa provincialis*, so called either from Provence, or from Provins, a town forty miles from Paris.

290. *Half a share.* A collection of papers of the year 1635, printed by Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps in his *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, vol. 1, p. 312, throws much light on the internal economy of the King's Company. The profits were divided between the actors and the "housekeepers," or proprietors, some of whom were actors also — witness the following extract: "That the house of the Globe was formerly divided into sixteen partes, whereof Mr. Cuthbert Burbidge and his sisters had eight, Mrs. Condell four, and Mr. Heminges four. That Mr. Tailor and Mr. Lowen were long since admitted to purchase four partes between them from the rest, viz., one part from Mr. Heminges, two partes from Mrs. Condell, and halfe a part a peece from Mr. Burbidge and his sister."

292. The friendship of Damon and Pythias was famous in antiquity.

294. *Jove himself.* Cf. iii. 4. 46.

295. ***A very, very — pajock.*** The word "pajock" is humorously substituted for "ass," which would — approximately — have rhymed. Many explanations of it have been given, but Dyce has shown that in Scotland the peacock is often called a "peajock," just as the turkey is a "bubbly-jock." Therefore we may be content, with Pope, to see an allusion to the fable of the birds choosing the peacock instead of the eagle as king. Mr. Irving adds a point by looking at a peacock-feather fan which he has taken from Ophelia's lap. Skeat, however, derives "pajock" from "patch," "a pied fool," and this explanation is supported by Spenser's use of "patchocke" for ragamuffin. Claudius is called "a king of shreds and patches" in iii. 4. 102.

303. ***recorders.*** A recorder appears to have been a flute with a hole bored in the side, and covered with gold-beaters' skin, so as to approach the effect of the human voice.

316. ***more richer.*** Cf. note on ii. 1. 11.

345. ***were she ten times our mother.*** This sounds mere folly to Rosencrantz, but Hamlet intends to reproach, not to be reproached.

348–349. ***these pickers and stealers,*** these hands, in allusion to the phrase in the catechism, "Keep my hands from picking and stealing." Cf. *As You Like It,* iv. 1. 111, "By this hand, it will not kill a fly."

354. Hamlet ironically suggests a cause for his distemper which Rosencrantz will understand. As a matter of fact, the loss of the crown is a small item in his score against Claudius. More is made of it in Q 1 and in Belleforest.

358. Malone quotes from Whetstone, *Promos and Cassandra* (1578), "Whylst grass doth growe, oft sterves the seely steede"; and from *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* (1578), "While grass doth growe, the silly horse he sterves."

360. ***To withdraw with you.*** He beckons Guildenstern aside, as if to impart a secret to him.

365. Guildenstern's speech was mere words, with no intelligible meaning.

372. ***as lying,*** in which Guildenstern has shown himself proficient.

373. ***and thumb.*** So F 1; Q 2 has *and the umber.*

385. ***this little organ,*** himself, rather than the recorder.

397. ***backed like a weasel.*** The full absurdity of Polonius' complaisance may be appreciated only by remembering that

the back of a camel is its most conspicuous part, quite unlike that of a weasel.

412. Nero was the murderer of his mother Agrippina.

417. ***seals,*** the seal of deeds.

Hamlet ends the scene on a note of the firmest resolution.

SCENE 3

Hamlet has his opportunity to translate resolution into action and misses it. Critics have objected to what they regard as the cold-blooded cruelty of his reasons for not killing the King while he is praying. But they do not observe that these are not reasons, only excuses. Hamlet would kill the King if he could, but he has delayed so long that he cannot now commit himself to the definite immediate act. But the hour is slipping from him. Claudius, in spite of his momentary weakness of contrition, is determined to get rid, in one way or another, of this dangerous prince.

5. ***The terms of our estate,*** the conditions on which the safety of our crown depends.

7. ***lunacies.*** So F 1; Q 2 has *browes.*

9. ***many many.*** Cf. i. 2. 129, " too too solid flesh."

11. Cf. Laertes' speech, i. 3. 10 ff.

15. ***The cease . . . dies*** is a somewhat tautological expression. Bailey proposed to read *Deceasing majesty.*

30. As a matter of fact, it was Polonius' own suggestion. Cf. iii. 1. 184.

33. ***of vantage,*** from a point of vantage.

35. ***dear my lord.*** " My lord," " my liege," becomes practically a single noun, like the French *milord.*

36–72. Claudius' better self is strong enough to make him repent his crime, but not to lead him to give up the fruits of it. The touch of remorse is artistically necessary to prevent his becoming a mere abstract character, beyond the reach of our understanding and sympathy.

37. ***the primal eldest curse,*** the curse of Cain.

39. ***as sharp as will,*** sharp enough, if nothing were in the way, to determine the will. Theobald proposed *as 't will.*

45. Cf. Lady Macbeth's washing of her hands in *Macbeth,* v. 1. 31, and ii. 3. 60:

> " Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? "

62. For the omission of the auxiliary verb with *compelled*, cf. i. 2. 90, and Abbott, § 403.

Claudius' confession removes the last vestige of doubt from the spectators' minds as to the truth of the Ghost's story.

75. Once Hamlet begins to " scan " and speculate, he is lost.

78. A pause, while Hamlet reflects in silence.

80. Cf. i. 5. 76 ff.

full of bread. Cf. *Ezekiel*, xvi. 49, " Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom: pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and her daughters."

83. " So far as we can tell by inference, not direct knowledge."

93–95. This passage " recalls very forcibly some of those painfully realistic representations of the torments of the damned, which are to be found in various illustrated books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries " (Marshall). The damned souls in the miracle plays were always represented with black faces. Cf. *Henry V*, ii. 3. 42, " Do you not remember, a' saw a flea stick upon Bardolph's nose, and a' said it was a black soul burning in hell-fire? "

96. This line is extremely ironical: Hamlet's delay only prolongs the days of his ineffectiveness and failure.

SCENE 4

There has been much critical controversy on the question of Gertrude's guilt or innocence in the matter of her husband's murder. I think the natural inference from this scene (especially l. 30), and from the Ghost's story in i. 5, is that she knew nothing of it. She was guilty of a sinful love for Claudius, but was not an accomplice in his greater crime. Hamlet, indeed, assumes throughout that the stain of murder as well as of adultery is upon her, but he is naturally inclined to take the blackest view. It is noteworthy that in the Q 1 the Queen's innocence is much more definitely declared (cf. Appendix A).

In any case, it is his mother's faithlessness in love that Hamlet resents most bitterly, and with this chiefly he upbraids her. At first he is successful: the stings of remorse begin to make themselves felt. Then comes the Ghost, and she is convinced that Hamlet is mad. From that moment she is overcome with fear, and his words pass over her unheeded. For the rest of the play her heart is cleft in twain; she vacillates to the end between good and evil, between her son and her lover.

4. ***silence.*** So Q 2, F 1. Many editors accept Hanmer's emendation, *sconce*.

9–10. ***thy father . . . my father,*** Claudius . . . the elder Hamlet.

24. Hamlet evidently thinks that the King is concealed behind the arras. He aims a blow at him out of pure impulse, without waiting to consider. And thus in the death of Polonius comes the first tragic result of his delay.

33. Hamlet is too intent on the business in hand to give Polonius more than a brief epitaph.

42. ***the rose,*** the charm, the grace; cf. iii. 1. 160. The idea is that Gertrude's wicked love makes the purest love seem a shameful thing.

44. ***sets a blister there.*** Harlots were branded in the forehead. Cf. iv. 5. 119, and *Comedy of Errors*, ii. 2. 138, " tear the stained skin off my harlot-brow."

49. ***this solidity and compound mass,*** the earth itself. For the idea of the whole universe being affected by a sin, cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ix. 1000:

> " Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
> In pangs, and nature gave a second groan;
> Sky loured, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
> Wept at completing of the mortal sin
> Original."

53. Opinions differ as to the action that should accompany this line on the stage. I have very little doubt that Hamlet draws a miniature, a " picture in little " (ii. 2. 384), of his father from his pocket, and then turns to point at one of Claudius that hangs on the wall of the closet. Both Irving and Salvini supposed the pictures to be seen with the mind's eye only.

92. Cf. iii. 2. 414.

98. ***a vice of kings.*** The Vice was a stock character in the Moralities; he appears to have personified the weaker side of human nature (hence his name); but practically he was a buffoon, and supplied the comic element in the dramas. Thus he is one of the ancestors of Shakespeare's fools. Several allusions to the Vice and his dagger of lath appear in the plays; cf. ***e.g. Twelfth Night,*** iv. 2. 132:

> " I 'll be with you again
> In a trice,

Like to the old Vice,
Your need to sustain;

Who, with dagger of lath,
In his rage and his wrath,
Cries, ah, ha! to the devil."

Thus " a vice of kings " means practically " a king *pour rire*."

102. ***shreds and patches.*** The Vice, like his successor, the Fool, appears to have been dressed often in motley. Cf. Skeat's interpretation of " pajock " in note on iii. 2. 295.

103. At his previous apparition the Ghost was visible to all those present; now he allows himself to be seen only by Hamlet, just as the ghost in *Macbeth* appears to the king only.

106. Here, as in ii. 2. 593 ff., Hamlet is quite conscious of his own weakness.

107. ***lapsed in time and passion,*** having allowed both time and the passion of revenge to slip by.

122. ***start up, and stand.*** *Hair*, partly, perhaps, owing to the influence of *soldiers*, is treated as a plural.

126. A reminiscence of the biblical phrase, " I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out " (*St. Luke*, xix. 40).

133. Cf. note on iii. 1. 171.

139–180. Those who believe that Hamlet was really mad get over this speech by pointing out that nearly all insane persons are prepared to assert solemnly their own sanity.

150. ***avoid what is to come,*** not " avoid the future," but " avoid sin in the future."

151. " Do not, by any new indulgence, heighten your former offences."

152. Even in his tenderness Hamlet cannot quite forget the bitterness of cynicism.

157. ***the worser.*** Cf. note on iii. 2. 316.

160. ***Assume,*** not " pretend," but " acquire."

161–165. These lines are not in F 1.

161. ***all sense,*** all consciousness of sinning.

162. ***Of habits devil,*** the evil genius of our habits. Q 2 has no comma after " eat," and Theobald proposed to read:

" Who all sense doth eat
Of habits evil."

168–170 (down to the word *potency*) are not in F 1.

169. ***And either . . . the devil.*** Q 2 has *And either the devil,* an obvious misprint. Some such emendation as *lay, curb, quell, shame,* or perhaps *house, throne,* is necessary.

172. ***same*** is used sarcastically, as so often in Shakespeare.

182. The rest of this speech is meant ironically.

bloat. So Theobald for the *blowt* of Q 2, *blunt* of F 1.

183. ***mouse,*** a term of endearment. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost,* v. 2. 19, and *Twelfth Night,* i. 5. 69, " Good my mouse of virtue, answer me."

194. The only other possible allusion to this lost story is in a letter of Sir John Suckling: " It is the story of the jackanapes and the partridges; thou starest after a beauty till it be lost to thee, and then let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too."

195. ***To try conclusions,*** to see what will happen.

200. ***I must to England.*** How does Hamlet know this? The scheme was imparted to Polonius in iii. 1. 177, to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in iii. 3. 4. Hamlet has had no chance of learning it from them; and if he knew of it, he must have seen the danger of leaving the King alive. Moreover, in iv. 3. 48 he expresses surprise at the news of his intended voyage.

210. Hamlet puns on the two senses of *craft,* viz. " ship " and " guile."

211. ***packing,*** plotting; perhaps also with reference to the other sense of " being off."

213. Hamlet has always a keen scent for the ironies of life.

I am inclined to accept Mr. Rose's suggestion that the first three scenes of the traditional Act iv should really be regarded as part of Act iii. Then if, with him, we give Act iii, sc. 1 to Act ii, the events of Act iii will be those of " one tremendous night." Act iv will cover Hamlet's absence, and Act v, as now, will begin with his return. By this arrangement we have well under way in Act iii two chains of effects springing from Hamlet's critical failure in Act iii, sc. 3. These are the attempts of Claudius upon Hamlet's life, and the death of Polonius, with its results. For the working out of these chains, see note on iv. 4, *init.*

ACT IV — SCENE 1

This scene is practically continuous with Act iii, sc. 4. As soon as Hamlet has left his mother's closet Claudius enters, to

learn the result of the interview. He finds the Queen overwhelmed and hardly able to speak — the combined effect of her son's reproaches and of her grief at his insanity.

12. ***good old man***, for so, in spite of his tediousness (ii. 2. 95), Polonius appeared to those gifted with less keen perceptions than Hamlet's. Even Claudius had faith in him (ii. 2. 154).

27. ***he weeps***. There does not seem to be anything in the last scene to justify this statement. Some critics think that Gertrude is henceforward on Hamlet's side, and is here doing her best to put his conduct in a favorable light. I doubt this; when in the presence of Claudius, she seems to be under his influence still.

40. This line is apparently incomplete in Q 2. F 1 omits ll. 41–45, and ends the scene with

> " And what 's untimely done. Oh come away,
> My soul is full of discord and dismay."

The most likely emendation of the Q 2 text is Capell's *so, haply, slander*. Tschischwitz suggests *by this, suspicion*.

SCENE 2

In this scene and the following, Hamlet continues his assumption of madness. He is not at all unwilling to be sent to England; it will compel him to further delay; and he promises himself an intellectual treat in checkmating any design that his companions may have against him.

12. ***a sponge***. Cf. Barnabe Rich, *Faultz, Faults, and Nothing else but Faults* (1606): " Vespasian, when reproached for bestowing high office upon persons more rapacious, answered ' that he served his turn with such officers as with spunges, which, when they had drunk their fill, were then the fittest to be pressed.' " Both Shakespeare and Rich are indebted for the idea to Suetonius, *Vita Vesp.* c. 16. In Q 1 this passage occurs near the end of iii. 2.

19. ***like an ape***. So F 1; but the Q 2 reading, *like an apple*, is nearly as good. Q 1 has *as an Ape doth nuts*.

29. Here, as in ii. 2. 269, Hamlet is probably talking deliberate nonsense. But the interpretations of various grave editors may be found in Furness' *Variorum* edition.

32. Cf. Psalm cxliv, " Man is like a thing of naught," and the contemptuous use of the phrase in *A Midsummer Night's*

Dream, iv. 2. 13, "a paramour is, God bless us, a thing of naught."

Hide fox, and all after. This phrase is omitted in Q 2; it is said to be a name for "hide and seek." Perhaps Hamlet rushes from the room, leaving the rest to pursue him; or perhaps the fox is Polonius, who, if he does not now, will soon stink like one. Cf. iv. 3. 37.

SCENE 3

9. Cf. Lyly, *Euphues* (p. 67, ed. Arber): "A desperate disease is to be committed to a desperate doctor."

21–23. *worms. . . emperor . . . diet.* There is an allusion to the famous Diet or convocation of the dignities of the German Empire held at Worms in 1521. It was before this body that Luther was summoned to appear.

The thought here is very similar to that of v. 1. 218 ff.

33. *a progress*, the technical term for a royal journey of state through the provinces.

48. Cf. note on iii. 4. 200.

50. "Whatever your purposes are, the angels are fighting on my side."

63. *free awe*, awe which does not need compulsion.

66. *congruing.* So Q 2; F 1 has *conjuring.*

70. *were ne'er begun.* So F 1; Q 2 has *will ne'er begin.*

SCENE 4

The present Act works out the results of Hamlet's failure until they bring about the catastrophe of Act v. There are two main threads of incident: (1) there is the failure of the plot against Hamlet's life, which leads to his return to Denmark, and drives Claudius to new devices; and (2) Hamlet's unkindness to Ophelia, together with the death of Polonius, makes her insane. Laertes returns, burning for revenge, and readily becomes the King's accomplice.

The stress laid upon the fortunes of Ophelia in the latter part of the play has its dramatic purpose. It impresses us with the fact that Hamlet's ineffectiveness has its tragic results outside his own life; and at the same time the pathos of the situation makes us feel pity rather than anger toward him, since his deep affection for Ophelia is manifest throughout. And it is

essential to the effect of tragedy that the sympathies of the spectator should be at the end with the hero.

The scene with the captain serves as a transition to the new Act; at the same time it strikes the note of contrast between Hamlet and Fortinbras, the strong, practical man. The perception of this contrast is characteristically put in Hamlet's own mouth.

Attempts have been made, without much success, to find an allusion in the expedition of Fortinbras to some enterprise of Raleigh or Essex or some other Elizabethan worthy.

3. *Craves.* So Q 2; F 1 has *claims.*

6. *in his eye.* Cf. iv. 7. 46, and *Antony and Cleopatra,* ii. 2. 212:

> " Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,
> So many mermaids, tended her i' the eyes."

The phrase occurs as a technical one for " in the royal presence " in the household books of James the First's reign. In F 1 the scene ends with l. 8.

36. Cf. i. 2. 150.

40–41. *some craven scruple . . . on the event.* Hamlet describes his own weakness better than any one can do it for him.

50. *Makes mouths at,* mocks at, makes faces at.

53. Is it by irony that Hamlet repeats Polonius' counsel? Cf. i. 3. 65.

60. *twenty thousand.* It was only " two thousand " in l. 25.

66. *my thoughts* — always thoughts, never deeds.

A comparison of ii. 2. 58 ff. with l. 2 of this scene points to an interval of a few days between scenes 3 and 4, in order that Claudius' " license " may reach Fortinbras. These must be spent by Hamlet in traveling from Elsinore — though it is on the sea (i. 4. 71) — to the port. Yet both i. 3. 1 and iv. 3. 43 imply that the port is close at hand. But iv. 3. 54 shows that Hamlet started directly after scene 3. In any case, a longer interval follows this scene, during which Laertes returns from France.

SCENE 5

The interest of scenes 5 and 7 lies partly in the ingenuity with which the King turns Laertes to his purposes, partly in the pathos of Ophelia's madness and death. Laertes is a youth of high spirit and true emotions, but his French training has left him

without high principle, and he is weak enough to be easily led. The genuine insanity of Ophelia is a pendant to that assumed by Hamlet; the immediate cause is her father's death, yet the loss of her lover must also have affected her deeply. The character of the songs she sings — they are not given in full in this edition — is not inconsistent with perfect purity; all who have had experience with mad patients can confirm this; and therefore it gives no support to the curious theory, held by no less a critic than Goethe, that she had been Hamlet's mistress.

2. *Gent.* So Q 2; these speeches are given in F 1 to Horatio, and ll. 14–15 to the Queen.

9. ***to collection***, to collect some meaning from it.

11. ***which***, the antecedent appears to be " the words."

17. Gertrude is still weakly remorseful.

23. The music used for Ophelia's songs upon the stage is said to have been handed down by tradition from Shakespeare's time. It is printed in Furness' *Variorum* edition, and in Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, vol. 1.

D. G. Rossetti used this first stanza as the opening of a beautiful little poem called *An Old Song Ended*.

26. The cockle hat, staff, and sandals were the guise of a pilgrim, often the disguise of a lover. Notice the confusion in Ophelia's mind throughout between her father and her sweetheart. She hardly knows which is dead. Of course, she never had any conception of how Polonius came by his death. That was kept a profound secret in the court, and Claudius himself was suspected in consequence.

38. ***did go***. Both Q 2 and F 1 read *did not go*, surely in error.

41. There is a monkish legend that a baker's daughter was turned into an owl for refusing bread to our Saviour. It is said by Douce to be well known in Gloucestershire, and Mr. Leland (*The English Gipsies*) found it among the gipsies, among whom the name for an owl is Māromengro's Chavi, or Baker's Daughter. The connection in Ophelia's mind is simply the idea of a sudden transformation, or change of circumstances, such as her father's death and Hamlet's absence have brought about for her.

48. It was the custom for the first girl seen by a man on the morning of February 14 to be regarded as his valentine, or true-love, for the year.

89. ***in clouds***, in mysterious reserve; the emendation *inclosed* is quite superfluous.

95. ***a murdering piece.*** This is generally explained as a piece of artillery, the French *meurtrière.* But may it not mean a play representing murder? For Claudius' present situation affects him, as such a play would do, through the imagination. And what more likely than that he explained, to Gertrude, his perturbation of Act iii, sc. 2 as due solely to the power of imagination?

97. ***Switzers.*** The kings of France had for many generations a Swiss body-guard, so that the term "Switzers" became really equivalent to "guards."

105. This may mean that the rabble supports every word that Laertes utters; but I think it refers rather to "custom" and "antiquity." Unless the word "king" is used as these direct, it is meaningless.

112. ***this.*** Contempt?

119. ***brows.*** Both Q 2 and F 1 read *brow.* Cf. note on iii. 4. 44.

123. Such sentiments are common in Shakespeare (cf. *e.g. Richard II,* passim), but they are generally put in the mouths of kings themselves, or their supporters.

130. Laertes' vigor of revenge is no doubt an intentional contrast to the languor of the quite equally sincere Hamlet.

142. ***swoopstake.*** Both Q 2 and F 2 have *soopstake;* Q 1 has *swoopstake-like.* In a swoopstake or sweepstake the winner draws all the stakes from the board; so the king suggests that Laertes means to make a general clearance of friend and foe. The "winner and loser" of l. 143 is, of course, not the same metaphor, only suggested by it.

146. ***the kind life-rendering pelican.*** F 1 reads ludicrously *politician.* It was a common belief that the pelican either fed its young, or restored them to life when dead, with its own blood. Many attempts have been made to explain the origin of this story, but it appears to be a pure legend. Moreover, it originally belonged to the vulture — the pelican of heraldry is really a kind of vulture — and was only transferred to the pelican by a mistake of the compilers of the Vulgate. (See the *Academy,* xxv. 97, 243.) In the Middle Ages the pelican symbolized first the Resurrection, then the Eucharist. A curious change took place at the Reformation. Both the Catholic conceptions of the Eucharist and the use of symbolism in religion fell into disfavor, and the pelican became thenceforward an emblem of self-sacrifice generally, and, in particular, of true kingship. The

emblem books of the period illustrate this abundantly. So does Lyly, of whose curious euphuism the display of fantastic similes from unreal natural history is characteristic. He calls Elizabeth " that good Pelican that to feede hir people spareth not to rend hir owne personne." From Lyly the tradition passed to Shakespeare. For Shakespeare, the young of the pelican represent filial ingratitude. Goneril and Regan are called " those pelican daughters " (*King Lear*, iii. 4. 77); and John of Gaunt, in his rebuke to Richard II (*Richard II*, ii. 1. 126), says:

> " That blood already, like the pelican,
> Hast thou tapped out and drunkenly caroused."

In *Edward III*, iii. 5. 111, which may or may not be by Shakespeare, Edward asks the meaning of the device on some colors, and the Black Prince replies:

> " A pelican, my lord,
> Wounding her bosom with her crooked beak,
> That so her nest of young ones may be fed
> With drops of blood that issue from her heart.
> The motto ' Sic et vos.' And so should you."

153. ***Let her come in.*** In Q 2 this is given to Laertes; F 1 has it as part of a stage direction: *A noise within. Let her come in.*

157. ***rose of May.*** Cf. iii. 1. 160; iii. 4. 42.

160. Neither here nor in i. 3 is Laertes, in spite of his affection for Ophelia, quite able to understand her.

161–163. These lines are not in Q 2. Nature, at its finest in Ophelia's love, has sent her wits after Polonius.

165. ***Hey non nonny.*** Such meaningless refrains are common in old songs; cf. the " adown adown " of l. 170, and the " down, adown, adowna " of *Merry Wives*, i. 4. 44. " Hey, nonny, nonny " occurs in Balthazar's song " Sigh no more ladies, Sigh no more " (*Much Ado*, ii. 3. 64), and " With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino " in " It was a lover and his lass " (*As You Like It*, v. 3. 17).

172. ***how the wheel becomes it.*** These are old-fashioned ballads which Ophelia has heard to the music of her nurse's spinning wheel. Steevens' statement that " wheel " means a refrain is probably purely imaginative.

The story or ballad of " the false steward " and " his master's daughter " is unknown.

174. ***more***, more touching.

175. Ophelia distributes her flowers appropriately, the rosemary and pansies to Laertes, the fennel and columbine to Claudius, the rue and daisy to the Queen.

rosemary was often strewn on biers, to signify remembrance. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iv. 5. 79:

> " Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
> On this fair corse ";

also *The Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 74:

> " For you there 's rosemary and rue; these keep
> Seeming and savour all the winter long;
> Grace and remembrance be to you both."

176. ***pansies*** are for thoughts, because of their name, the French *pensées*. The flower is also a country emblem of love and courtship.

178. Laertes uses *thoughts* in a sense it sometimes has, of " melancholy."

180. ***fennel*** symbolizes flattery and ***columbine*** ingratitude. Cf. Chapman, *All Fools*, ii. 1:

> " What 's that? a columbine?
> No; that thankless flower fits not my garden."

181. ***rue***, a bitter plant with medicinal virtues. It was symbolical of repentance, and was therefore usually mingled with the holy water, and known as " herb of grace," or " herby-grass." This name was also sometimes given to wormwood, another symbol of remorse (cf. iii. 2. 19). When Ophelia says to the Queen, " You must wear your rue with a difference," she probably means, " For you it signifies repentance, for me only regret." Cf. *Richard II*, iii. 4. 104:

> " Here did she fall a tear; here in this place
> I 'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace;
> Rue, even for ruth, shall shortly here be seen,
> In the remembrance of a weeping queen."

183. ***a difference*** is properly a heraldic bearing, meant to distinguish the arms of one branch of the same family from another.

184. ***a daisy***, for faithlessness, as ***violets*** are for faithfulness. Cf. Greene, *Quips for an Upstart Courtier*, " Next them grew the dissembling daisy to warn such light-of-love wenches not to trust every fair promise that such amorous bachelors make them."

184-185. ***they withered all.*** Faithfulness, says Ophelia, left the world with my father. Yet here, too, Hamlet must be in her thoughts; cf. i. 3. 7, where Laertes compared his love for her to " a violet in the youth of primy nature."

187. ***bonny sweet Robin.*** Cf. *Two Noble Kinsmen*, iv. 1. 107:

> " I can sing the Broome
> And Bonny Robin."

The tune is found in several Elizabethan song books; the words are lost, but they appear to have been a ballad on Robin Hood.

190. This is a song known in the song books as *The Merry Milkmaids*, or *The Milkmaids' Dumps.*

195. This scene is ridiculed in Jonson, Chapman, and Marston's *Eastward Hoe* (1604), iii. 1:

> " His head as white as milk,
> All flaxen was his hair;
> But now he is dead,
> And laid in his bed,
> And never will come again."

Hamlet is introduced in the same scene as a half-mad footman.

202. ***commune with***, share.

213. ***burial.*** So F 1; Q 2 has *funeral.*

216. Cf. *Genesis*, iv. 10, " The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground "; and *Richard II*, i. 1. 104:

> " Which blood, like sacrificing Abel's, cries
> Even from the tongueless caverns of the earth,
> To me for justice and rough chastisement."

SCENE 6

This scene serves to keep the fortunes of Hamlet in our mind during the period of his absence. It is simultaneous with scenes 5 and 7, the action of which is practically continuous, and in a modern play it would probably be made to take place in a corner of the same hall, while the King and Laertes whisper apart.

2. ***Sea-faring men.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *sailors.*

22. ***thieves of mercy***, merciful thieves. Cf. *brow of woe* for "woeful brow," in i. 2. 4.

they knew what they did. A theory has been founded on this phrase, coupled with Hamlet's mysterious allusion to two crafts meeting in one line, and his expressed intention to delve one yard below his enemies' mines (iii. 4. 210), that the pirate was of his own procuring. But surely Hamlet's mine was merely the altering of the letters. (See v. 2. 12 ff.)

26. ***the bore of the matter.*** The metaphor is from a gun that will carry heavy shot.

SCENE 7

The Laertes motive and the Ophelia motive of scene 5 are continued here. Laertes proves an easy tool for the King's ingenious villainy. His naturally impetuous temper, made degenerate by such a life in France as is suggested in iii. 1, snatches at even an ignoble chance of revenge. It is noteworthy that in Q 1 the proposal to use a poisoned foil comes from Claudius.

10. ***much unsinew'd,*** *i.e.* very weak.

15. ***his sphere.*** The Ptolemaic astronomy regarded the universe as composed of ten orbs or hollow spheres, one within the other. In the inmost seven of these the planets had their courses; in the eighth, the fixed stars; the other two were the Crystalline and the Primum Mobile. There are many allusions to this arrangement in Shakespeare: *e.g. A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii. 1. 153:

> "And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
> To hear the sea-maid's music."

18. Cf. note on iv. 3. 4.

20. ***that turneth wood to stone.*** A spring the water of which contains much lime will petrify with a deposit of it any object put into it. Harrison, *Description of England* (ed. New Shak. Soc., pp. 334, 349), mentions several such, one at King's Newnham in Warwickshire. There is a famous one also at Knaresborough.

21. ***Convert his gyves to graces.*** I suppose the idea in *gyves* is "faults that should be fetters on his popularity." Clarke interprets, "turn all my attempts to restrain him into so many injuries perpetrated against his innocence and good qualities." Theobald proposed *gybes*, Daniel *gyres*.

22. ***so loud a wind.*** So F 1; Q 2 has *so loved Arm'd.*

28. ***of all the age,*** qualifies "challenger," not "mount." Moberly points out that the King of Hungary, at his coronation, stands on the Mount of Defiance at Presburg and challenges the world to dispute his claim.

30. ***sleeps.*** The plural form occurs in Phaer's *Æneid,* ii, "in Sleepes and drinking drownd."

33. Claudius hopes to hear from England of the success of his plot against Hamlet's life. He is ironically made to express this hope just before Hamlet's letter is brought in.

34. ***I loved . . . we love.*** Claudius' affection for Polonius was personal, not merely official.

37. ***this to the queen.*** Nothing more is said of this letter, but Q 1 has a scene in which Horatio tells the Queen of Hamlet's danger, and she acknowledges that her husband is a villain.

59. "How can Hamlet be returning, and yet — it is his own character — how otherwise?" But several critics would read *How should it not be so?*

63. ***checking at.*** The metaphor is from falconry; the hawk is said to check when she leaves her proper game for some other bird.

68. ***shall uncharge,*** *i.e.* shall not charge or accuse.

69–82. ***My lord . . . graveness.*** These lines are not in F 1.

73. Hamlet is by no means a bookworm; this accounts for his popularity with the common people, and for Ophelia's description of him in iii. 1. 159 ff.

82. ***Importing health and graveness.*** Warburton proposed *wealth,* and Malone explained *health* as meaning "attention to health"; but probably it refers back to "careless livery." Cf. a similar construction in iii. 1. 159, "the courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword."

84. One remembers the feats of chivalry at Elizabeth's court, in which Sidney contended with "that sweet enemy, France."

86. The mythical Centaur was doubtless in Shakespeare's mind.

93. ***Lamond.*** So F 1; Q 2 has *Lamord.* Mr. Elliot Browne suggests an allusion to a famous swordsman, Pietro Monte, who was instructor to Louis the Twelfth's Master of Horse. In the English translation of Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano,* bk. i, he is called Peter Mount.

112–119. "Love is a thing of time, not of eternity; it has a beginning and an end."

123. The recognition of a "should" when it is too late is like a spendthrift's sigh for his squandered estate, a bitter-sweet sensation. It was a belief that sighing drew blood from the heart; cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 5. 59, "Dry sorrow drinks our blood."

134. ***in fine***, at last.

139. ***a pass of practice***, "a treacherous pass" (cf. l. 68), or, "a pass in which you are practiced," or "a pass by way of friendly exercise."

146. ***Under the moon.*** Cf. note on iii. 2. 268.

151. ***shape***, design.

163. The scenic apparatus of Shakespeare's time would have been inadequate to represent Ophelia's death upon the stage; even now it would be difficult. In Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*, which ends with a suicide by drowning, the event is only reported by a witness who sees it from a window.

164. Cf. *Locrine*, v. 5:

> "One mischief follows on another's neck.
> Who would have thought so young a maid as she
> With such a courage would have sought her death."

168. ***his hoar leaves.*** The willow leaf with its silvery underside is always a conspicuous object in river scenery. Cf. Lowell, *Among My Books:* "Shakespeare understood perfectly the charm of indirectness, of making his readers seem to discover for themselves what he means to show them. If he wishes to tell that the leaves of the willow are gray on the underside, he does not make it a mere fact of observation by bluntly saying so, but makes it picturesquely reveal itself to us as it might in nature."

170. ***crow flowers***, generally the buttercups, sometimes the *Lychnis Flos cuculi*, or Ragged Robin.

long purples, the country name for various species of *Orchis*, the *Orchis mascula* or *Orchis maculata*.

178. ***tunes.*** So F 1 and Q 1; Q 2 has *lauds*, *i.e.* chants, so called from the psalm *Laudate Dominum*. The F 1 reading suits better the character of Ophelia's songs in scene 5.

This scene is ridiculed in Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Scornful Lady*, ii. 3:

> "I will run mad first, and if that get not pity,
> I 'll drown myself to a most dismal ditty."

189. ***these***, the tears, for which he is apologizing.

192. ***douts***. So Knight for the *doubts* of F 1; Q 2 has *drowns*.

An interval of a very few days separates the Acts, leaving time for Hamlet to return from the seaport (cf. iv. 4, note *ad fin.*), and for preparation to be made for Ophelia's burial.

ACT V—SCENE 1

This scene does not advance the action much, for Hamlet's quarrel with Laertes has very little to do with their subsequent encounter; it only serves to bring into contrast the opposing characters of the two men. But we want a moment or two of relief before the breathless rush with which the play closes, and this the grim humor of the grave-diggers and Hamlet's moralizing afford. The solemnity of Ophelia's burial helps us to realize the pathos of her fate, and therein the tragedy of Hamlet's failure.

The dialogue between the clowns affords an example of Shakespeare's unrivaled power of insight into the mental habits and modes of reasoning of uneducated people.

9. ***se offendendo***, a mistake of the clown's for *se defendendo*, a phrase used, not in suicide cases, but in verdicts of justifiable homicide. It has been suggested that the reasoning in this speech and the next is a parody of the arguments used in the inquest of a certain Sir James Hales, reported in Plowden's *Commentaries* (3 Eliz.).

14–15. ***goodman delver***. The First Clown, who takes the lead, is the sexton, the Second, an ordinary laborer.

32. ***even Christian***, fellow Christian. But there is, of course, an allusion to the supposed equality of all Christians in the sight of the Church.

35. ***Adam's profession***. Cf. Tennyson's *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*, "the grand old gardener and his wife," and the well-known couplet:

> "When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?"

38. This must be satire on the ludicrous statements of writers on heraldry, as to the antiquity of their science. The Q 2 text here runs: '*A was the first that ever bore arms. I 'll put another*

question to thee. The printer's eye seems to have slipped from one *arms* to another.

44. ***confess thyself*** — There is a proverb "Confess thyself, and be hanged." Hence the idea of a gallows-maker in the Second Clown's mind.

45. ***Go to.*** The phrase here expresses the Second Clown's vague sense that he is being chaffed. It corresponds to the "Garn, who are you a gitting at?" of the modern Londoner.

59. ***and unyoke***, and then thy task is done.

67. ***get thee to Yaughan.*** So F 1; Q 2 has *get thee in.* Collier proposed *Get thee to — (Yawns)!* Yaughan is a Welsh name, and there is therefore no need to regard it as a corruption of the German Johan. Probably the allusion is to some well-known tavern-keeper. That there was a tavern attached to the Globe Theatre is proved by the sonnet on the burning of that playhouse (Collier, *Annals of the Stage*, i. 388). The passage looks like one of the bits of clown's gag satirized in iii. 2. 42 (see quotation from Q 1 in note *ad loc.*).

69. The Clown's song is an inaccurate version of three stanzas of "The aged lover renounceth love," from *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557). It is attributed in Gascoigne's *Epistle to a Young Gentleman*, prefatory to his poems, and in Harl. MS. 1703, to Lord Vaux. In *Tottel's Miscellany* (ed. Arber, p. 173) the verses run as follows:

"I lothe that I did loue,
In youth that I thought swete:
As time requires for my behove
Me thinkes they are not mete.

For age with steyling steppes,
Hath clawed me with his crowche,
And lusty life away she leapes,
As there had bene none such.

A pikeax and a spade
And eke a shrowdyng shete
A house of clay for to be made,
For such a gest most mete."

75. "Custom hath made it proper or natural to him to take his employment easily."

90–94. Cf. *Timon of Athens*, i. 2. 216:

" And now I remember, my lord, you gave
Good words the other day of a bay courser
I rode on; it is yours, because you liked it."

100. ***loggats***, a game resembling bowls, but played on a floor instead of a green. The loggats are pear-shaped pieces of wood, and are pitched, not rolled.

103. ***for and***, a strong form of *and*, equivalent to the earlier *and eke*.

106–121. The exact interpretation of these law-terms is not of much importance to the interpretation of the play, but, according to Lord Campbell, they are " all used seemingly with a full knowledge of their import."

115. ***the fine of his fines***. The first *fine* has the sense of " end." This line is omitted in Q 2. The printer's eye has apparently slipped from the first *his recoveries* to the second; cf. note on l. 38.

126. ***in that***, *i.e.* in legal parchments, which give no assurance against death.

149. ***by the card***, with precision; the origin of the expression is probably from the accuracy with which charts are drawn out. Staunton, however, refers it to the " card " of etiquette, or book of good manners; cf. v. 2. 114. A third explanation is that it refers to the card of " plat " on which an actor's " part " was copied out for him. Some of these Elizabethan " plats " are still preserved. Cf. Appendix A.

170. Cf. Marston, *Malcontent*, iii. 1, " your lordship shall ever finde . . . amongst a hundred Englishmen fourscore and ten madmen."

177. ***thirty years***. This statement, coupled with that in l. 160 that the Sexton " came to 't' on the day of Hamlet's birth," is on the face of it conclusive that Hamlet is a man of thirty. This is consistent with the thirty years of married life of the Player King and Queen (iii. 2. 165), and also, as it seems to me, with Hamlet's developed character and philosophy. Several critics, however, point to considerations which lead them to regard him as nearer twenty than thirty; Professor Minto would treat him as a youth of seventeen. The chief of these considerations are:

(1) Hamlet's mother is still young enough to love and be loved. But so was the Player Queen; and iii. 3. 68, 83 imply that Gertrude is a middle-aged matron.

(2) Hamlet is called "young Hamlet" (i. 3. 123), and his love for Ophelia is spoken of as "a violet in the youth of primy nature," etc. (i. 3. 7 ff.). But Henry V, who is made by Shakespeare at least twenty-six when he comes to the throne, is spoken of as "in the very May-morn of his youth." Cf. also the phrase in *Much Ado*, iii. 3. 140, "How giddily 'a turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five and thirty."

(3) Hamlet has barely left Wittenberg, and the Elizabethan noble rarely stayed at the University beyond seventeen. This was certainly true in England, but not in Denmark. Cf. Nashe, *Pierce Penniless' Supplication to the Devil* (Shak. Soc., p. 27): "For fashion sake some [Danes] will put their children to school, but they set them not to it till they are fourteen years old, so that you shall see a great boy with a beard learn his A B C, and sit weeping under the rod when he is thirty years old."

The fact is that many men among the northern nations are no older at thirty than Hamlet is represented. Furnivall thinks that Shakespeare meant Hamlet to be about twenty when he began the play, but found it necessary to make him older as he went on! Mr. Marshall suggests that this bit, and the "fat and scant of breath" bit (v. 2. 298), were put in to make the part fit the personality of Burbage.

190. ***three and twenty years.*** This date, together with Hamlet's boyish reminiscences of Yorick, is quite consistent with the "thirty years" of l. 177. Q 1, however, has in place of both the other two passages:

> "Look you, here 's a skull hath been here this dozen years,
> Let me see, ay, ever since our last King Hamlet
> Slew Fortinbras in combat, young Hamlet's father,
> He that 's mad."

198. ***Yorick.*** Dr. Nicholson finds in this passage a compliment to Tarlton, Kempe's great predecessor as a comic actor. The name may be a corruption of the Danish *Jörg*, or of the *Roricus* of Saxo-Grammaticus. This Roricus was Hamlet's grandfather. Mr. Latham identifies Yorick with the Eric who plays Claudius' part in the German version of the play; and suggests that the idea of his being a jester may be a confusion due to existence of some *Gesta Erici Regis*. Is not this a little far-fetched?

211. ***on a roar.*** The nearest parallel is *Rape of Lucrece*, 1494:

" For sorrow, like a heavy-hanging bell
Once set on ringing, with his own weight goes."

213. Cf. note on iii. 1. 148.

240. The personal note of the remainder of the scene is a curious contrast to the impersonal generalized tone of the speculations in which Hamlet has just been indulging. Observe that he has only just reached Elsinore and knows nothing of Ophelia's fate. It is not revealed to him until l. 264, where Laertes speaks of " my sister." All the dialogue that follows has the rhythmical dignity of a dirge; see, *e.g.*, the speeches beginning with ll. 249, 261, 266, 277, 292.

244. ***it.*** Cf. note on ii. 1. 216.

250. ***doubtful.*** There is nothing in the description of Ophelia's death given by Gertrude in iv. 7. 163 ff., to show that it was voluntary.

255. ***her virgin crants.*** Q 2 has *crants*, F 1 *rites*. Warburton proposed *chants*, but *crants* is probably the same word as the *corances* of Chapman's *Alphonsus*. It signifies " crowns " or " garlands," and refers here to the garlands which it was customary to carry before the biers of unmarried women and then to hang up in the church.

256. ***the bringing home.*** A funeral is here compared to the procession of a bride from church. The same idea is the motive of a beautiful *Elegy* by Robert Bridges (*Shorter Poems*, p. 16). Cf. also *Romeo and Juliet*, iv. 1. 84.

261. Even Laertes, shallow and debauched boy as he is, is dignified and ennobled by sorrow. His love for his sister is the redeeming point in him.

263. ***violets*** are Ophelia's flowers throughout; cf. i. 3. 7; iv. 5. 184. Cf. also Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, xviii:

" 'T is well; 't is something; we may stand
Where he in English earth is laid,
And from his ashes may be made
The violets of his native land."

269. ***treble woe.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *terrible woer*.

276. Olympus, Pelion, and Ossa are three mountains in the north of Thessaly. The Giants, warring with the Gods, are said to have piled them upon each other in an attempt to scale heaven.

277. ***blue***; again the " picturesque " epithet.

279. *the wandering stars*, the planets.

290. Hamlet has forgotten everything else — his delayed revenge, his mother's sin, his own danger, even his pessimism — everything but just the love which he had put from him. He is a philosopher, but his action is usually swayed by impulse.

292. *I loved Ophelia.* Cf. the denial of iii. 1. 115, 120, "I did love you once . . . I loved you not."

299. *Woo't drink up eisel?* This line is one of the half dozen cruces of the play. Q 1 reads *vessels*, Q 2 *Esill*, F 1 *Esile*. There are two plausible explanations between which the reader may choose:

(1) Some river may be intended and, if so, it is probably the *Yssel*, a northern branch of the Rhine, which runs not far from Denmark. Steevens, however, conjectured *Weissel*, Hanmer *Nile*, and Elze *Nilus*, the two latter probably being led by the mention of crocodiles.

(2) Theobald proposed *eisel*, meaning "vinegar"; cf. Glossary. The advantage of this explanation is that it suggests a disagreeable drink, corresponding to such an unsavory food as a crocodile, rather than an impossibly huge one.

305. Almost insensibly Hamlet has slipped from the expression of real feeling into the half-simulated extravagances, the "wild and whirling words," that have become almost a second nature to him.

306. *Ossa.* Cf. note on l. 276.

307–311. Q 2 gives these lines to the Queen; F 1, in error, to the King.

310. *her golden couplets.* The dove never lays more than two eggs, and the young, when first hatched, are covered with a golden down.

315. The idea is, "Nothing can prevent inferior creatures, such as Laertes, from following their nature, and now and then they get a chance to come to the front." The proverbial expression, "Every dog hath his day," is found in four other places in Elizabethan literature. In spite of this the emendation proposed by Mr. Street, *dog will have his bay*, is so plausible that I incline to adopt it.

SCENE 2

It is necessary first that Hamlet's reappearance should be explained. This is done by his narrative to Horatio. Then follows the brief scene with Osric, which declares Hamlet's

character to be fundamentally unchanged; and then comes the end. Hamlet's revenge is accomplished at last, not deliberately, but by a sudden impulse, and at what a cost! Claudius died justly, but — over and beyond Ophelia — the blood that is shed is at Hamlet's door. "The rest is silence," and the entry of Fortinbras and Hamlet's dying submission symbolize the triumph of another order of mind.

1. ***this***, the fate of Ophelia; ***the other***, Hamlet's adventures.

6. ***Rashly.*** This is more characteristic of Hamlet than he knows; if he is effective at all, it is always rashly, from impulse, and not from a "deep plot."

9. ***pall.*** So Q 2; F 1 has *parle*. Pope suggested *fail*.

10. The metaphor is from the making of skewers or some such thing.

21. Cf. iv. 3. 60 ff.

22. This is generally explained, "With the suggestion of such dangers, if I am allowed to live." I think it means rather "With such exaggeration of the actual facts of my life."

31. ***they***, not "my enemies" but "my brains." Hamlet means that under the stress of circumstances he acted without stopping to think it over.

33. A piece of affectation which only a clever young man of Hamlet's type could be guilty of. Cf. Montaigne (tr. Florio, 1603, p. 125): "I have in my time seen some, who by writing did earnestly get both their titles and living, to disavow their apprentisage, mar their pen, and affect the ignorance of so vulgar a quality."

42. ***a comma 'tween their amities.*** I think Johnson explains this rightly: "A comma is the note of connection and continuity of sentences; the period is the note of abruption and disjunction." But various editors have thought it necessary to conjecture *commere*, *comate*, *cement*, and so forth.

57. I doubt if we have the materials to say whether Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were fully aware of the tenor of their commission to England. In the *Historie of Hamblet* they are certainly guilty. But in any case they had already (ii. 2. 282 ff.) given Hamlet proof of their willingness to sacrifice friendship to the bidding of the king.

61. ***the pass and fell incensed points.*** These are merely two ways of expressing the same idea. In fencing you make the pass with the point.

63. ***Does it not . . . stand me now upon.*** Is it not imperative upon me? Cf. *Richard III*, iv. 2. 59:

> " It stands me much upon
> To stop all hopes ";

and *Richard II*, ii. 3. 138, " It stands your grace upon." The similar phrase " It lies on " occurs in *Coriolanus*, iii. 2. 52, " It lies you on to speak." See Abbott, § 204.

65. One of Hamlet's few allusions to his disinheritance.

68–82. These lines are not in Q 2.

73. ***the interim is mine.*** A reflection likely to give Hamlet satisfaction; an interim — a further chance of delay.

78. ***court.*** So Rowe for the *count* of Qq and Ff. I think that the emendation is justified by l. 237.

80. ***Osric.*** A type of the empty-headed courtier or man about town, the affected fribble, parleying euphuism or the Sidneian tongue, and so covering his nothingness with a nicety of borrowed phrase.

84. ***this water fly,*** this ephemeral frail creature that flits so idly over the surface of a tragic pool.

89. ***a chough.*** The idea is probably rather " an ignorant provincial " than " a chattering crow." See Glossary.

94. Cf. the scene with Polonius, ii. 2. 391 ff.

108. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 1. 102–104, " I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy; I beseech thee, apparel thy head." The phrase is a curious one. It was etiquette or courtesy to stand bare-headed before a superior, and yet perhaps a higher courtesy to omit the ceremony when requested. But this refinement is not in Osric.

109–142. These lines are omitted in F 1.

112. ***differences,*** qualities that distinguish him from ordinary men; cf. the heraldic use (iv. 5. 183, note).

113. ***feelingly,*** with insight and nice perception.

114. ***the card or calendar of gentry.*** The metaphor may be from the shipman's card (*Macbeth*, i. 3. 17) or chart, by which a ship's course is directed; or more likely from some card or booklet giving rules of etiquette. So in Lyly a " card " is a set of moral precepts or examples.

117–125. Hamlet parodies Osric, and succeeds in making himself quite unintelligible to him in his own tongue.

120. ***yet but yaw neither,*** and yet but stagger in the attempt to overtake his perfections; cf. Glossary, *yaw*. Q 3 has *yet but*

raw. Staunton suggested *and wit but yaw;* Tschischwitz, *and yet but row.*

131. ***in another tongue.*** Horatio is sarcastic. "What! you can chatter in a jargon that is certainly not English; can't you understand in it too? pray try."

162. "You want a comment in the margin to explain the text."

172–176. It is difficult to make out from Osric exactly what the wager is. Probably "a dozen" is a vague general term. The king bets that Laertes will not make as much as twelve hits for Hamlet's nine. It might, of course, take twenty-one passes to decide this.

190. Hamlet's courtesies are becoming a little irritable.

196. So Q 2. F 1 has *mine* (F 2 *nine*) *more of the same bevy.* I am inclined to suggest *many more of the same bread,* to help out the "yesty" metaphor below.

200–201. ***fond and winnowed.*** So F 1. Q 2 has *prophane and trennowed;* Warburton proposed *fanned and winnowed,* Johnson, *sane and renowned,* Tschischwitz, *profound and winnowed.* Nicholson thinks that the second word is *vinewed* or *fenowed* (*i.e.* rotten). The F 1 text may stand, in the sense of "foolish and over-refined." The whole speech is obscure. Osric is a type of the foolish young man about town, who picks up the phrases and tricks of style fashionable at the moment, and uses them without any originality or understanding; who parleys euphuism after Lyly, and Arcadianism after Sidney. Hamlet says of him and his kind that they have only got the slang of the day and its manner of dialogue. These borrowings (or "collection") act as yeast to "raise" or fill with bubbles the bread of their absurd and fantastic opinions; if you blow them to their trial (*i.e.* talk to them with any originality in their own vein), the bubbles burst, their golden words are spent.

203–218. These lines are omitted in F 1.

222–223. With Hamlet's presentiment of coming evil, compare that of Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice,* i. 1, and that of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale,* ii. 1.

231. Cf. *St. Matthew,* x. 29, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father."

234–253. The text is Johnson's. Q 2 reads *since no man of ought he leaves, knowes what ist to leave betimes, let be;* and F 1,

since no man ha's ought of what he leaves. What is't to leave betimes?

241–255. Dr. Johnson wished "that Hamlet had made some other defence; it is unsuitable to the character of a good or brave man to shelter himself in falsehood." Hamlet, however, as Bradley points out (*Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 140), was thinking chiefly of the wrong he had done Laertes in killing his father, and could make no other defence; he could not say, "I meant to stab the King, not your father." Moreover, there is no moral difference between feigning insanity and affirming it. If Hamlet were referring merely to his action at the grave, his statement would come near being the truth.

260–261. "An opinion and precedent to show that I am justified in making peace." The wish to be right in the public opinion of his world is characteristic of Laertes.

266. For the double meaning of *foil*, see Glossary. The use of the pun, to produce a grimly ironical effect, is quite in Shakespeare's later manner, after the mere delight in punning for its own sake had disappeared.

274. ***he is better'd***, he has the better reputation. The odds have really been laid on Laertes, so the phrase "laid the odds" in l. 272 must be taken in the general sense of "made a bet."

283. ***union.*** So F 1. Q 2 has *unice;* Q 3 *onixe.*

285–289. Commentators quote several illustrations of this noisy Danish custom.

293. The so-called "union" is doubtless poison in reality.

298. ***fat, and scant of breath.*** It has been thought that this is an unpoetic description of "the glass of fashion and the mould of form," and that it is to be explained by the physical peculiarities of the actor Burbage. Very probably "fat" means little more than "out of training." But see ll. 220–221.

310. "You trifle with me as if I were a child."

312. *They change rapiers.* This stage direction, which is Rowe's, may, as it stands, be explained in three ways:

(1) Both swords may be knocked out of the combatants' hands, and in the hurry each may pick up his opponent's; or

(2) Laertes only may drop his sword; Hamlet may put his foot on it, and courteously offer his own. This was Salvini's way of playing the scene; or

(3) Laertes may try to disarm Hamlet by gripping the hilt of his sword at close quarters. In a fencing school Hamlet's

proper reply would be to perform the same manœuvre, and so the two would change weapons.

Bradley, however, shows that "the words *and Hamlet wounds Laertes* destroy the point of the words given to the King in the text. If Laertes is already wounded, why should the King care whether the fencers are parted or not?" Bradley, therefore, would transfer this portion of the stage direction to a point immediately after Hamlet's "Nay, come, again," and before *The Queen falls.*

317. Cf. note on i. 3. 115.

343. ***of it,*** of Hamlet's death.

347. Cf. Sylvester, *Translation of Du Bartas:*

> "And death, dread serjeant of th' eternal Judge,
> Comes very late to his sole-seated lodge."

as; an ellipse, "Had I but time — which I have not, as."

352. Cf. *Macbeth,* v. 8. 1:

> "Why should I play the Roman fool, and die
> On mine own sword?"

355. ***a wounded name.*** Cf. l. 261, "to keep my name ungored."

358. ***felicity,*** the felicity of death, the "consummation devoutly to be wished."

375. ***cries on havoc,*** cries out against the butchery.

376. ***eternal.*** It is suggested that here, and in i. 5. 21, *Julius Cæsar,* i. 2. 160, *Othello,* iv. 2. 130, "eternal" is used for "infernal." But the usual sense of "eternal" would at least fit this passage and that in *Julius Cæsar.*

383. ***his mouth,*** the king's.

400. ***rights of memory,*** claims which are not forgotten.

APPENDIX A

THE FIRST QUARTO OF 1603

It is difficult, without actually reprinting the Q 1 version of *Hamlet*, to give an exact idea of its character and its divergencies from the received text. The student should by all means read it for himself in Griggs' facsimile, or, better still, in Vietor's parallel text edition (No. 2 of *Shakespeare Reprints*, Marburg, 1891). It is also to be found in Furness' *New Variorum Hamlet*, vol. ii, and in the *Cambridge Shakespeare*, vol. ix. I propose, however, in this Appendix to mention briefly the points on the consideration of which the theory as to the nature of Q 1 given in the Introduction is based. They appear to me to justify the three following propositions:

1. Q 1 is an imperfect and mutilated copy of the play.

2. The version from which it was taken was different from that represented by Q 2 and F 1.

3. This version, as well as the later one, was the work of Shakespeare.

I will take these in their turn.

1. There can be no doubt that whatever Q 1 represents it does so very badly. In many places it is so garbled that it would be unintelligible without a knowledge of the later texts. It is most probably one of the "stolen and surreptitious copies" mentioned in the preface to F 1. And I think we may assume that it was not stolen from any written copy of the play. No combination of an imperfect draft and a mole-eyed printer would be sufficient to account for the result. Moreover, the errors are in many cases manifestly due to mishearing and not to misreading. The more probable hypothesis is that the printer sent an agent to the theatre where *Hamlet* was being acted, and that he, with or without the aid of shorthand, took down such notes as he could of the dialogue.[1]

[1] Shorthand was invented before 1602. The schemes proposed in Timothy Bright's *Characterie* (1588) and Bales' *Art of Brachygraphie* (1590) are not of much use; but John Willis' *Art of Stenographie* (1602) is more practical. The method was certainly used for pirating plays. Heywood complains of it in two or three places. In the prologue to the *Rape of Lucrece* (1608), he speaks

These were afterward strung together into something resembling a play. They were in parts extremely scanty, and were either left incomplete or else very roughly pieced out. It has been suggested that some hack poet was employed to revise them; but that is extremely unlikely. Not Chettle, nor Munday, nor any of Henslowe's crew of scribblers could have produced quite such an *indigesta moles*. Their lines might have lacked wit and imagination, but they would at least have made sense, and to some extent would have scanned. And the same reasons which make it unlikely that Q 1 was printed from a written text dispose of the idea that a sight of the "prompter's copy" was obtained for the revision. It is, however, just possible that two or three of the subordinate actors may have lent their "parts." [1] The speeches belonging to Horatio, Marcellus, and Voltemar are perhaps better represented than the rest.

Those characteristics of Q 1 that may fairly be attributed to the shortcomings of the reporter fall under four main heads:

(*a*) He appears to have left out bits of the dialogue here and there. In a few places this can be shown almost with certainty. Thus, for i. 4. 69–71 Q 1 has:

> "What if it tempt you toward the flood, my Lord,
> That beckles ore his bace into the sea."

Here it is pretty obvious that the line

> "Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff"

has been dropped out. This being so, it is natural to suppose that the same thing has occurred in other passages, and especially where Q 1 gives only a line or two at the beginning and another line or two at the end of what appears as a long speech in Q 2. The shortness

of it being only "copied by the ear," and in that to *If you know me, you know Nobody*, he says that the audience

> "Did throng the seats, the boxes, and the stage
> So much that some by stenography drew
> The plot: put it in print: scarce one word true."

Cf. also Marston's *Malecontent* and Webster's *The Devil's Law Case* (1623):

> "Do you hear, officers!
> You must take great care that you let in no brachygraphy men to take notes."

See Levy, *Shakespeare and Shorthand*.

[1] Actors' parts appear to have been copied for them on pasteboards, known as "plats" or "cards" (cf. note on v. 1. 149). Some of these are still extant; three, *The Battle of Alcazar*, *Frederick and Basilea*, and *The Dead Man's Fortune*, have been facsimiled for Halliwell-Phillipps.

of the play in Q 1 confirms this view. It contains only 2143 lines to the 3891 of the Globe text. But it is impossible to say how much of this is due to omissions, and how much to a fuller expansion in Q 2 of the first form of the play.

(*b*) In many passages the words have been taken down quite correctly, but the reporter has failed to observe the proper distribution into lines. Thus part of Hamlet's soliloquy in i. 2 becomes:

> "O God within two moneths; no not two; maried,
> Mine uncle: O let me not thinke of it,
> My father's brother: but no more like
> My father, then I to *Hercules.*
> Within two months ere yet the salt of most
> Unrighteous teares had left their flushing
> In her galled eyes: she married, O God, a beast
> Devoyd of reson would not have made
> Such speede: Frailtie, thy name is Woman,
> Why she would hang on him, as if increase
> Of appetite had growne by what it looked on."

Similarly, prose is often printed as verse, and verse sometimes as prose.

(*c*) Often the reporter's hearing has failed him, and he has put down, instead of the words actually spoken, others resembling them in sound. This is the origin of such mistakes as *impudent* for *impotent* (i. 2. 29), *right done* for *writ down* (i. 2. 222), *ceremonies* for *cerements* (i. 4. 48), *martin* for *matin* (i. 5. 89).

(*d*) Where the notes are very scanty and the reporter has forgotten the context, he has strung them together with words of his own. The result is a curious medley of Shakespearean phrases bereft of their meaning, like a church window filled with fragments of glass from some shattered design. Thus, for i. 2. 101 ff. Q 1 has:

> "It is a fault gainst heaven, fault gainst the dead,
> A fault gainst nature, and in reason's
> Common course most certain
> None lives on earth, but he is born to die."

Here the reporter seems to have been misled by some note of the words "from the first corpse" (course, Q 2), and to have turned reason's "common theme" into "common course."

2. After making all allowance for the reporter's haphazard way of working, I cannot persuade myself that the *Hamlet* which he saw at the theatre and tried to reproduce was the *Hamlet* of Q 2. There are wide differences between the two versions that none of the

blundering mental processes just enumerated are adequate to explain. They are, however, quite consistent with the theory that we have in Q 1 a slovenly version of an early and crude form of the play.

(*a*) The order of the scenes is slightly different from that of Q 2. The chief variation is that the "To be or not to be" soliloquy and the interview between Hamlet and Ophelia (iii. 1, in Q 2) precede in Q 1 the "fishmonger" scene with Polonius and the entry of the players (ii. 2, in Q 2).

(*b*) Many of the names of the characters are different. *Leartes, Ofelia, Gertred, Cornelia, Voltemar, Rossencraft, Gilderstone* may be mere corruptions aided by mishearing for the *Laertes, Ophelia, Gertrard* or *Gertrad* (*Gertrude*, F 1), *Cornelius, Voltemand, Rosencrans* or *Rosencraus* (*Rosincrance*, F 1), *Guildensterne* of Q 2. *Duke* and *Duchess* for *King* and *Queen* (iii. 2. 165) are of no importance. But some further explanation of the substitution of *Gonzago* for *Albertus* (iii. 2. 249), and of *Polonius* and *Reynaldo* for *Corambis* and *Montano*, is necessary. Notwithstanding the *Corambus* in the German play (Introduction, p. xii and Appendix C) and the traces of the old names in the stage directions of Q 2 (cf. notes to i. 2. 1 and ii. 1. 1), nothing will persuade me to the theory gravely held by Dr. Tanger that these are mere mistakes due to similarity of sound. Other instances of the change of names at the revision of a play are to be found in the *Petruchio* and *Grumio* of *The Taming of the Shrew*, which replace the *Ferando* and *Sander* of *The Taming of a Shrew*, and in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, where the Italian names of the first version give way to English ones in the second.

(*c*) There are passages where the Q 1 text, although apparently not corrupt, differs widely from Q 2, and as a rule is markedly inferior in richness of vocabulary and depth of thought. Such differences appear to point directly to revision. Excellent instances may be found in Ophelia's two speeches concerning Hamlet. Cf. with the iii. 1. 158 ff. of Q 2 the following of Q 1:

> "Great God of heaven, what a quick change is this?
> The Courtier Scholar Soldier, all in him
> All dasht and splintered thence, O woe is me,
> To a seene what I a seene, see what I see."

And this with the ii. 1. 77 ff. of Q 2:

> "O young Prince Hamlet, the only floure of Denmark,
> Hee is bereft of all the wealth he had,
> The Jewell that adorn'd his feature most

Is filcht and stolne away, his wit's bereft him.
Hee found mee walking in the gallery all alone,
There comes hee to mee with a distracted looke,
His garters lagging downe, his shooes untide,
And fixt his eyes so stedfast on my face
As if they had vow'd, this is their latest object.
Small while he stoode, but gripes me by the wrist,
And there he holdes my pulse till with a sigh
He doth unclaspe his holde, and parts away
Silent, as is the mid time of the night:
And as he went, his eie was still on mee,
For thus his head ouer his shoulder looked,
He seemed to finde the way without his eies:
For out of doores he went without their helpe,
And so did leave me."

I do not think that the same hand that garbled the other parts of the play is likely to have produced these neat paraphrases.

(*d*) There are other passages in Q 1 that have no representatives at all in Q 2. Only a few of these are of any length. One is given in the notes to iii. 2. 50; another is a scene between Horatio and Gertrude, which comes between iv. 5 and iv. 6 of the received text. It is hard to see how these can have come into existence if they were not part of the play as heard by the reporter.

(*e*) In several important respects the characterization of Q 1 is different from that of Q 2. I do not dwell on the point that Hamlet himself is far less subtly represented. This may be merely the result of the accidental omission by the reporter of some of the delicate touches in the delineation of the complete play. But there are at least two variations which must surely be deliberate. One is that our sense of Laertes' guilt is diminished by the fact that in Q 1 the proposal to use a poisoned foil comes not from him, but from Claudius. The other, that the character of Gertrude is put in quite a different light. In Q 2 the extent of her guilt is left vague and doubtful, and to the end she wavers between husband and son. In Q 1 she is made to protest very definitely her innocence of the murder, and thenceforward to show herself a strong partisan of Hamlet's. This is her position in the *Historie of Hamlet* also, and the modification of it shown in Q 2 seems to me clearly the result of design. It was Shakespeare's intention that Hamlet should stand alone.

3. Assuming, then, that Q 1 and Q 2 represent two successive forms of *Hamlet*, a first sketch and a revision, are we justified in treating them both as the work of Shakespeare, or ought we to

suppose that the first sketch contains any appreciable amount of the pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet*, in the existence of which we have good reason to believe? (See Appendix B.) I prefer the former view, although the Clarendon Press editors give the weight of their authority to a theory that Q 1 is the early *Hamlet* partly revised by Shakespeare, and that this revision had not gone much beyond Act ii. I do not accept this. I believe that Q 1 is Shakespeare's independent treatment of the subject suggested to him by the older play. If he borrowed anything beyond the outline of the plot, it was probably the fooling, meant to tickle the groundlings, at the end of i. 5. It is true that the three last acts are not only more incoherent in themselves than the two earlier, but also that they depart more from Q 2; but for this there are many explanations. The reporter may have grown tired of his task. So far as the dialogue goes, in the few places where we get it uncorrupted there is nothing inconsistent with its being Shakespeare's. It is not all at his highest level; it may have been hastily written for a provincial tour, and one need hardly be surprised that what is retained in Q 2 is better than what is rejected. But it does not, any of it, appear to have any affinity with the kind of thing that the pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet* probably was. I do not want, however, to lay too much stress on this question of style for, after all, the passages in question are necessarily the more colorless and commonplace ones, and I do not believe anyone has a sufficiently acute critical sense to say definitely of such that they are or are not Shakespeare's. Much more important is the essential identity, in other respects than style, of even the last three acts of Q 1 and Q 2. Almost all the details, the incidents and touches of characterization, the deep and imaginative sayings, are there at least in germ. I need only endorse Furnivall's remark that, if Q 1 is not Shakespeare's, then "the credit of three-fifths of the character of Hamlet, and about one-half of the working out of it, belong to the author of the old *Hamlet*." [1]

[1] *Forewords to Q. 2*, 1604 (Griggs' Facsimile).

APPENDIX B

THE PRE-SHAKESPEAREAN HAMLET

THERE are several allusions in contemporary literature to a play of *Hamlet*, which can hardly have been Shakespeare's, at the close of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries. It is worth while to collect them here.

1. From an epistle of Thomas Nashe, prefixed to Greene's *Menaphon: Camilla's alarm to slumbering Euphues*, 1589:

"Ile turne backe to my first text, of studies of delight, and talke a little in friendship with a few of our triviall translators. It is a common practice now a daies amongst a sort of shifting companions, that runne through every arte and thrive by none to leave the trade of *Noverint* whereto they were borne, and busie themselves with the endevours of art, that could scarcelie latinize their necke verse if they should have neede; yet English Seneca read by candle-light yeeldes manie good sentences, as *Blould is a beggar*, and so foorth: and if you intreate him faire in a frostie morning, he will afoord you whole *Hamlets*, I should say Handfulls of tragical speaches. But O grief! *Tempus edax rerum;* — what is it that will last always? The sea exhaled by drops will in continuance be drie; and Seneca, let bloud line by line, and page by page, at length must needs die to our stage."

It has been thought possible that, although *Menaphon* was not published until 1589, Nashe's *Epistle* may have been written as early as 1587.

2. From the *Diary* of Philip Henslowe for 1594, while the Lord Chamberlain's and the Lord Admiral's men were playing for him at Newington Butts: "9. of June 1594. Rd. at hamlet. viijs."

The play appears to have been acted only once at this time, and is not marked n[ew] e[nterlude].

3. From Lodge's *Wit's miserie, and the World's madnesse*, 1596:

"[Hate Virtue is] a foul lubber, and looks as pale as the wisard of the ghost, which cried so miserally at the theator, like an oyster-wife, *Hamlet revenge*."

4. The following, though subsequent to F 1, may possibly refer to the early play. The actual phrase "Hamlet revenge" does not occur in the text of Shakespeare's play, as it has reached us, though the exhortation to revenge is given in other words in i. 5. 8, and i. 5. 25. From Dekker's *Satiromastix*, 1602:

"*Asinius.* Wod I were hanged if I can call you any names but Capitaine and Tucca.

Tucca. No. Fye'st; my name's Hamlet revenge: thou hast been at Parris garden, hast not?"

Tucca comes on, "his boy after him, with two pictures under his cloak"; cf. iii. 4. 53.

5. From *Westward Hoe*, 1607:

"I, but when light wives make heavy husbands, let these husbands play mad *Hamlet;* and crie *revenge.*"

6. From Armin's *Nest of Ninnies*, 1608:

"ther are, as Hamlet saies, things cald whips in store."

Cf. iii. 1. 70, note.

7. From Rowland's *The Night Raven*, 1618:

"I will not cry *Hamlet Reuenge* my greeves, But I will call *Hangman Reuenge* on theeves."

An attempt has been made to show that Shakespeare's play belongs to the sixteenth century, on the strength of the following MS. note in Gabriel Harvey's copy of Speght's Chaucer:

"The younger sort take much delight in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, but his Lucrece and his tragedy of *Hamlet Prince of Denmarke*, have it in them to please the wiser sort."

But though Harvey doubtless purchased the volume in 1598, as this date occurs both at the beginning and end of it, the MS. notes therein appear to have been written at various subsequent times.

We may gather from the above passages that the play was known at least as early as 1589 (possibly 1587); that it was played at the Theatre, at Newington Butts, and at Paris Garden; that it contained the Ghost; and that the phrase, "Hamlet revenge," made an impression on the popular imagination.

Fleay (*Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama*, Kyd, ii. 26) suggests that the author of this older *Hamlet* was Thomas Kyd. It certainly appears likely that the attack in Nashe's epistle to *Menaphon* was aimed at him.

APPENDIX C

FRATRICIDE PUNISHED

Most of our information respecting the early performances of English plays in Germany is derived from Cohn's invaluable *Shakespeare in Germany*, to which the student is referred for further information. The following facts bear upon the relations of *Fratricide Punished* to our *Hamlet*.

1. In Heywood's *Apology for Actors* (ed. Shak. Soc., p. 40) it is stated that "the King of Denmarke, father to him that now reigneth, entertained into his service a company of English comedians, commended unto him by the honourable the Earle of Leicester."

2. Cohn shows that this king was Frederick II, who died in 1588. Leicester's players went to the court of the Elector of Saxony in 1586, subsequently returned to England and became the nucleus of the company with which Shakespeare was connected throughout his dramatic career. See Fleay, *Chronicle of the London Stage*.

3. There is a diary kept by an officer of the Saxon court at Dresden in 1626, which contains a list of plays performed by "the English actors." Among these occurs *Hamlet a Prince in Denmarck*.

4. The existing text of *Fratricide Punished* is from a MS. dated "Pretz, den 27 October, 1710." It is printed by Cohn, and translated in Furness' *New Variorum Hamlet*, ii. 121.

Dr. Latham (*Two Dissertations on Hamlet*, 1872) argues, but not, I think, very conclusively, that the date of *Fratricide Punished* can be fixed at about 1589, by an allusion to the expedition to Portugal in that year.

APPENDIX D

THE "TRAVELING" OF THE PLAYERS[1]

THE passage in which Rosencrantz explains the reasons why Hamlet's favorite company of tragedians are traveling appears in a different form in each of the three versions. They may here be given together for purposes of comparison.

FIRST QUARTO

Ham. How comes it that they trauell? Do they grow restie?
Gil. No my lord, their reputation holds as it was wont.
Ham. How then?
Gil. Yfaith my Lord, noueltie carries it away,
For the principall publike audience that
Came to them, are turned to private playes,
And to the humour of children.

SECOND QUARTO

Ham. How chances it they trauaile? their residence both in reputation, and profit was better both wayes.
Ros. I thinke their inhibition, comes by the means of the late innouasion.
Ham. Doe they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the City; are they so followed?
Ros. No indeede are they not.

FIRST FOLIO

Ham. How chances it they trauaile? their residence both in reputation and profit was better both wayes.
Rosin. I thinke their Inhibition comes by the meanes of the late Innouation?
Ham. Doe they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the City? Are they so follow'd?
Rosin. No indeed, they are not.
Ham. How comes it? Doe they grow rusty?
Rosin. Nay, their indeauour keepes in the wonted pace; But there is Sir an ayrie of Children, little Yases, that crye out on

[1] See ii. 2. 343.

> the top of question; and are most tyrannically clap't for 't: these are now the fashion, and so be-ratled the common Stages (so they call them) that many wearing Rapiers, are affraide of Goose-quils, and dare scarce come thither.

It will be seen that the reason for the "traveling" assigned in Q 1 is the popularity of a rival company of children; in Q 2, an "inhibition" due to an "innovation"; in F 1, both these causes are mentioned.

The title page of Q 1 shows us that *Hamlet*, in the early days of its career, was acted out of London. It is not unnatural, therefore, to seek in this passage an allusion to some "traveling" of Shakespeare's own company, which may help to determine the date of the play. It will be well to take the two points separately.

1. *The "Inhibition" and "Innovation."* — It would appear that "inhibition" was a technical term for an order restraining theatrical performances, or the performances of a particular company, from taking place in London. The "inhibition" here spoken of has been identified with various such orders issued at different times during the long struggle between the theatrical or court and the anti-theatrical or city parties, represented respectively by the Privy Council and the Corporation. (See Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, and Fleay, *Chronicle History of the London Stage*.) So, too, the "innovation" has been interpreted as "the new practice of introducing polemical matter on the stage," or "the new morals of the Puritan party." But we are helped to a better explanation by the fuller knowledge of the history of the Globe company, which is due chiefly to Fleay. In 1601 the company was in disgrace at court, owing to the share its members had taken in the conspiracy of Essex and Southampton. A performance of *Richard II* had been given by them to encourage the conspirators.[1] For the only time during a long period of years they were not invited to take part in the Christmas festivities. Probably they traveled during the autumn; they seem to have been at Aberdeen in October[2] and at Cambridge about the same date;[3] and if so, this is probably the "traveling" alluded to in the play. Then the "inhibition" will

[1] See Hales' *Notes and Essays*, and the Introduction to Chambers' edition of *Richard II* (Falcon Series).

[2] Cf. *Macbeth* (Arden Series), Introduction, p. viii, and the excursus on Shakespeare in Scotland in Knight's Shakespeare.

[3] Kempe and Burbage are introduced in the second part of *The Returne from Parnassus*, a Cambridge play with a local scene, probably written in 1601. (Cf. Macray's edition of the play, and Fleay, *Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama*, ii. 349.)

be the refusal of permission to act at court, and the "innovation," the political innovation or conspiracy that led to it.

2. *The Aery of Children.* — Can this allusion also be referred to the same year, 1601? It was just at this time that the children of the Chapel Royal were acting at the Blackfriars. They took a prominent part in the stage controversy known as the "war of the theatres," and among other plays they produced, between 1597 and 1603, Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels* and his *Poetaster*, — satirical plays, full of attacks on rival poets and players, and answering well the description given in the text. Moreover, the Q 1 phrase, "the humours of children," seems to point to Jonson's fondness for painting "humours" or comic types. Witness the titles of his earlier plays, *Every Man in his Humour* and *Every Man out of his Humour*. If the allusion has been correctly identified, *Hamlet* may be the play in which Shakespeare "put down" Ben Jonson.[1]

The question remains, why was the point about the "innovation" omitted in Q 1, and that about the children in Q 2? The first difficulty is easily explained. When the reporter went to the theatre, — probably early in 1602, as the book was entered in the Stationers' Registers in July of that year, — Elizabeth was still on the throne. Whatever the Globe company chose to do in the provinces, they would have been ill-advised to allow any allusion to the facts of their disgrace to stand in the play when it was acted in town. Just in the same way, the most objectionable scene of *Richard II*, from a political point of view, was omitted from the two editions of the play published in Elizabeth's lifetime. In 1604, however, the date of Q 2, Elizabeth was dead and such nice caution was no longer necessary. At the same time another change of circumstances led to the omission of the attack on the player-children. By 1604 the so-called "war of the theatres" was over, Jonson and Shakespeare were probably friends again, and the latter had no desire to print anything discourteous to the former.[2] In the meantime, however, the passage had been elaborated at the general revision of the play to the form in which it is found in F 1. As to the reappearance of both the allusions in 1623, probably they had remained throughout in the theatre copy of the play. When F 1 was published, both the matters to which they referred had become ancient history, and there was no reason why they should be suppressed.

[1] Cf. *The Returne from Parnassus.* Fleay, however, thinks that the play meant was *Troilus and Cressida.*

[2] See note on iii. 2. 50, regarding the omission in Q 2, probably for similar reasons, of the attack upon Kempe, which appeared in Q 1.

APPENDIX E

DIDO, QUEEN OF CARTHAGE

It is worth while to reprint the passage from *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, parodied in *Hamlet*, ii. 2. The play was published, as by Marlowe and Nashe, in 1594, the year after Marlowe's death. It is usually supposed to have been left incomplete by him, and finished by Nashe. Fleay, however, thinks that it was an early play, written by the two in collaboration. The passage in question is from Act ii, sc. 1:

Æn. At last came Pyrrhus, fell and full of ire,
His harness dropping blood, and on his spear
The mangled head of Priam's youngest son;
And, after him, his band of Myrmidons,
With balls of wild-fire in their murdering paws,
Which made the funeral flame that burnt fair Troy;
All which hemmed me about, crying, "This is he!"
Dido. Ah, how could poor Æneas scape their hands?
Æn. My mother Venus, jealous of my health,
Convey'd me from their crooked nets and bands;
So I escaped the furious Pyrrhus' wrath:
Who then ran to the palace of the king,
And at Jove's altar finding Priamus,
About whose withered neck hung Hecuba,
Folding his hand in hers, and jointly both
Beating their breasts, and falling on the ground,
He, with his falchion's point raised up at once,
And with Megæra's eyes, star'd in their face,
Threatening a thousand deaths at every glance:
To whom the agèd king thus, trembling, spoke;
"Achilles' son, remember what I was,
Father of fifty sons, but they are slain;
Lord of my fortune, but my fortune's turned:
King of this city, but my Troy is fired;
And now am neither father, lord, nor king:
Yet who so wretched but desires to live?
O, let me live, great Neoptolemus!"
Not moved at all, but smiling at his tears,
This butcher, whilst his hands were yet held up,
Treading upon his breast, struck off his hands.

Dido. O, end, Æneas! I can hear no more.
Æn. At which the frantic queen leaped on his face,
And in his eyelids hanging by the nails,
A little while prolonged her husband's life.
At last, the soldiers pull'd her by the heels,
And swung her howling in the empty air,
Which sent an echo to the wounded king:
Whereat he lifted up his bed-rid limbs,
And would have grappled with Achilles' son,
Forgetting both his want of strength and hands;
Which he disdaining, whisk'd his sword about,
And with the wind thereof the king fell down;
Then from the navel to the throat at once
He ripp'd old Priam; at whose latter gasp
Jove's marble statue gan to bend the brow,
As loathing Pyrrhus for this wicked act.
Yet he, undaunted, took his father's flag,
And dipp'd it in the old king's chill-cold blood,
And then in triumph ran into the streets,
Through which he could not pass for slaughter'd men
So, leaning on his sword, he stood stone-still,
Viewing the fire where with rich Ilion burnt.

APPENDIX F

GOETHE AND COLERIDGE ON HAMLET

THE two following passages are the foundation of modern Shakespeare criticism.

1. From Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* (1795):

"I sought for every indication of what the character of Hamlet was before the death of his father; I took note of all that this interesting youth had been, independently of that sad event, independently of the subsequent terrible occurrences, and I imagined what he might have been without them.

"Tender and nobly descended, this royal flower grew up under the direct influences of majesty; the idea of the right and of princely dignity, the feeling for the good and the graceful, with the consciousness of his high birth, were unfolded in him together. He was a prince, a born prince. Pleasing in figure, polished by nature, courteous from the heart, he was to be the model of youth and the delight of the world.

"Without any supreme passion, his love for Ophelia was a presentiment of sweet needs. His zeal for knightly exercises was not entirely his own, not altogether natural to him; it had rather to be quickened and inflamed by praise bestowed upon another. Pure in sentiment, he knew the honourable-minded, and would prize the repose which an upright spirit enjoys, resting on the frank bosom of a friend. To a certain degree he had learned to discern and value the good and the beautiful in arts and sciences; the vulgar was offensive to him; and if hatred could take root in his tender soul, it was only so far as to make him despise the false and fickle courtiers and scornfully to play with them. He was calm in his temper, simple in his behaviour, neither content in idleness, nor yet too eager for employment. An academic routine he seemed to continue even at court. He possessed more mirth of humour than of heart; he was a good companion, compliant, modest, discreet, and could forget and forgive an injury; yet never able to unite himself with one who overstept the limits of the right, the good, and the becoming.

"Figure to yourselves this youth, this son of princes, conceive him vividly, bring his condition before your eyes, and then observe him

when he learns that his father's spirit walks; stand by him in the terrible night when the venerable ghost itself appears before him. A horrid shudder seizes him: he speaks to the mysterious form; he sees it beckon him; he follows it and hearkens. The fearful accusation of his uncle rings in his ears; the summons to revenge, and the piercing reiterated prayer: 'Remember me!'

"And when the ghost has vanished, whom is it we see standing before us? A young hero panting for vengeance? A born prince, feeling himself favoured in being summoned to punish the usurper of his crown? No! Amazement and sorrow overwhelm the solitary young man; he becomes bitter against smiling villains, swears never to forget the departed, and concludes with the significant ejaculation: 'The time is out of joint: O cursed spite, that ever I was born to set it right!'

"In these words, I imagine, is the key to Hamlet's whole procedure. To me it is clear that Shakespeare sought to depict a great deed laid upon a soul unequal to the performance of it. In this view I find the piece composed throughout. Here is an oak tree planted in a costly vase, which should have received into its bosom only lovely flowers; the roots spread out, the vase is shivered to pieces.

"A beautiful, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which makes the hero, sinks beneath a burden which it can neither bear nor throw off; every duty is holy to him, — this too hard. The impossible is required of him, — not the impossible in itself, but the impossible to him. He winds, turns, agonizes, advances, and recoils, ever reminded, ever reminding himself, and at last almost loses his purpose from his thoughts, without ever again recovering his peace of mind."

(2) From Coleridge's *Notes and Lectures upon Shakespeare* (1808):

"I believe the character of Hamlet may be traced to Shakespeare's deep and accurate science in mental philosophy. Indeed, that this character must have some connection with the common fundamental laws of our nature may be assumed from the fact that Hamlet has been the darling of every country in which the literature of England has been fostered. In order to understand him, it is essential that we should reflect on the constitution of our own minds. Man is distinguished from the brute animals in proportion as thought prevails over sense; but in the healthy processes of the mind, a balance is constantly maintained between the impressions from outward objects and the inward operations of the intellect; for if there be an overbalance in the contemplative faculty, man thereby becomes the creature of mere meditation, and loses his natural power of action.

Now, one of Shakespeare's modes of creating characters is to conceive any one intellectual or moral faculty in morbid excess, and then to place himself, Shakespeare, thus mutilated or diseased, under given circumstances. In Hamlet he seems to have wished to exemplify the moral necessity of a due balance between our attention to the objects of our senses and our meditation on the working of our minds, — an *equilibrium* between the real and the imaginary worlds. In Hamlet this balance is disturbed; his thoughts and the images of his fancy are far more vivid than his actual perceptions, and his very perceptions, instantly passing through the *medium* of his contemplations, acquire, as they pass, a form and a colour not naturally their own. Hence we see a great, an almost enormous, intellectual activity, and a proportionate aversion to real action consequent upon it, with all its symptoms and accompanying qualities. This character Shakespeare places in circumstances under which it is obliged to act on the spur of the moment. Hamlet is brave and careless of death; but he vacillates from sensibility, and procrastinates from thought, and loses the power of action in the energy of resolve. Thus it is that the tragedy presents a direct contrast to that of *Macbeth*; the one proceeds with the utmost slowness, the other with a crowded and breathless rapidity."

APPENDIX G

METRE[1]

1. Metre as an Indication of Date

English blank verse did not come into use till the sixteenth century. At the commencement of its career, the rules which regulated its employment were strict. It was only when the instrument was becoming familiar that experiments could be ventured upon, and variations and modifications freely introduced. The changes in the structure of blank verse between the time when Shakespeare commenced writing and the time of his retirement are great; and these variations are among the most important indications of the date of any given play. Thus, broadly speaking, the less strictly regular the metre, the later the play.

In the same way, a gradually increasing disregard of other kindred conventions marks the later plays as compared with the earlier. A good deal of rhyme survives in the dialogue in the earlier plays; later it is to be found only occasionally at the close of a scene or a speech to round it off — probably a concession to stage tradition analogous to the similar use of "gnomæ" in Greek plays, and of a "sentiment" in modern melodrama.

In the present play, the general characteristics of the metre appear to be those of Shakespeare's middle period. But there are an unusual number of irregularities; the intense excitement constantly finds vent in rapid dialogue which overflows the bounds of metre.

The extensive use of prose in the play is worth careful notice. Prose was at first used by Shakespeare for comic passages only, and even when this limitation ceased to be observed, it continued in general to be the medium of a lower plane of emotion than that represented by blank verse. Thus in the present play it is appropriate to the discourse between Hamlet and the players (ii. 2 and iii. 2), between Hamlet and the clowns (v. 1), between Hamlet and Osric (v. 2). It is also, of course, used for letters (ii. 2; iv. 7) and the speech of servants. But prose is also employed in the

[1] This outline of Shakespeare's Prosody is adapted, by the kind permission of Mr. A. D. Innes, from the one written by him for his edition of *Julius Cæsar*, in this series.

middle and later plays to produce special and peculiar effects, *e.g.* for the sleep-walking scene in *Macbeth* (v. 1), and for Ophelia's madness (iv. 5). Similarly, I think, Hamlet speaks in prose whenever he is playing the madman; when he is not so acting, — in the soliloquies, in the scenes with Horatio (iii. 2; v. 2), in the interview with his mother (iii. 4), in the lament over Ophelia (v. 1), — he uses blank verse. In the scene with Ophelia (iii. 1) he passes from blank verse to prose just at the point where he begins to suspect her good faith. Of course while Hamlet speaks prose, personages of less dignity must do the same; the King, however, is not so bound (iv. 3).

The "plays within the play" (ii. 2; iii. 2) are written in a stilted and archaic style of blank verse, in order to produce an artificial effect in comparison with the ordinary dialogue, as that itself is artificial when compared with the natural speech of ordinary life. (Cf. notes *ad loc.*)

Rhymed decasyllable couplets are used to close a scene or a speech; and Hamlet occasionally breaks into doggerel rhyme in moments of excitement.

2. Blank Verse

Our study of versification is commonly restricted to that of Latin and Greek. When we examine English verse structure, a distinction at once appears. In the classical verse the governing element is quantity; in English it is *stress*. And inasmuch as stress is much less definite than quantity, the rules of English verse cannot be given with the same precision as those of Latin and Greek. But we may begin with certain explanations as to what stress is *not*. A "stressed" syllable is not the same as a long syllable; nor is stress the same as *sense*-emphasis. Any strong or prolonged dwelling of the voice on a syllable, for whatever reason, is stress. So, while a syllable must be either long or short, there are many shades of gradation between the unstressed and the strongly stressed. And as in Greek tragic verse a long syllable may, in certain positions, take the place of a short one, so a moderately stressed syllable may often in English take the place of an unstressed one.

To start with, then, — to get at the basis of our metre, — we will take no account of weak stress, but treat of all syllables as if they must have either no stress or a strong stress; and throughout, the word stress, when used without a qualifying adjective, will mean strong stress. The acute accent (´) will be used to mark a stress, the grave (`) to mark a weak stress, the ˘ to mark a syllable sounded but not stressed.

The primary form of the Shakespearean line is — five feet, each of two syllables; each foot carrying one stress, on the second syllable; with a sense pause at the end of the line, and generally a slight pause, marked by a comma perhaps, after the second or third foot. This is called a cæsura.

But look′, | the morn′, | in rus′ | set man′ | tle clad′ (i. 1. 166).

3. Normal Variations

If there were no variations in blank verse, however, the effect would be monotonous and mechanical after a very few lines. The desired variety is secured in several ways.

(*a*) *Stress Inversion.* The first variation is brought about by the stress in one or two of the feet being thrown on the first instead of the second syllable. This is known as an "inverted" stress.

1st. Cost′ly | thy ha′ | bit as′ | thy purse′ | can buy′ (i. 3. 70).
2d. The wind′ | sits′ in | the shoul′ | der of′ | your sail′ (i. 3. 56).
3d. But this′ | most foul′ | strange′ and | unnat′ | ural (i. 5. 28).
4th. Why thy′ | canon′ | ized bones′, | hearsed′ | in death′ (i. 4. 47).
5th. Affec′ | tion ! pooh′ ! | you speak′ | like′ a | green′ girl (i. 3. 101).

The stress is thus thrown back much more commonly in the first foot of the line than elsewhere: and in the other cases the stressed syllable usually follows a pause.

(*b*) *Extra syllables.* Variety is introduced by the insertion of an extra unstressed syllable which is not extra-metrical, analogous to the use of an anapæst instead of an iambus.

1st. I ăm more′ | an an′ | tique Ro′ | man than′ | a Dane′ (v. 2. 352).
3d. Let′ it | be te′ | năblĕ in′ | your si′ | lence still′ (i. 2. 248).
4th. The light′ | and care′ | less liv′ | ĕry that′ | it wears′ (iv. 7. 80).
5th. How wear′ | y, stale′, | flat′ and | unprof′ | ĭtăble (i. 2. 133).

As a general rule, however, such extra syllables are very slightly pronounced; not altogether omitted, but slurred, as very often happens when two vowels come next to each other, or are separated only by a liquid (see § 6).

(*c*) *Extra-metrical syllables.* Extra-metrical unstressed syllables are added after a pause, sometimes after the second foot, rarely after the third.

2d. Till′ the | last trum′(pet) : | for char′ | it a′ | ble pray′ers (v. 1. 252).
3d. That can′ | denote′ | me tru′(ly) : | these′ in | deed′ seem (i. 2. 83).

More frequently an extra-metrical syllable comes at the end of a line, and this is common in this play. It is only in quite early plays that it is at all unusual; in the later ones it is the normal rhythm.

Whe'ther | 't is no' | bler in' | the mind' | to suf'(fer)
The slings' | and ar' | rows' of | outra' | geous for'(tune)
Or' to | take arms' | against' | a sea' | of trou'(bles) (iii. 1. 57–59).

The increasing frequency of extra-metrical syllables is a useful approximate guide to the date of a play. But they are never so frequent in Shakespeare as in the works of some of the younger dramatists.

(*d*) *Run-on lines.* The variation which perhaps most of all characterizes the later plays is the disappearance of the sense pause at the end of the line. At first, a clause running over from one line to the next is very rare; in the last plays, it is extremely common. (The presence of a sense pause is not necessarily marked by a stop; it is sufficient for the purpose that the last word should be dwelt on; the pause may be merely rhetorical, not grammatical.) The proportion of overflow to end-stopped lines in *Hamlet* is large.

4. Occasional Variations

(*a*) *Omission of syllables.* An unstressed syllable is sometimes omitted. This is found only where the stress is very strong, or when the omission is really made up for by a pause.

For'ward, | not per' | manent', | — sweet', | not last'(ing) (i. 3. 8).

(*b*) Occasionally lines occur with an extra foot, *i.e.* an additional stress after the normal ten syllables.

A wor | thy pi | oner! | Once more | remove, | good friends (i. 5. 162).
Had he | been van | quisher; | as, by | the same cov' | enant (i. 1. 93).

And sometimes there is even an extra syllable added (see § 3 (*c*)).

'T is sweet | and com | menda | ble in | your na | ture, Ham(let) (i. 2. 87).

But perhaps this should be scanned

'T is sweet | and com | mend'bl' in | your na | ture, Ham(let).

Cf. § 6. But this does not often occur in the course of a speech, and where it does there is usually a break in the middle of the line. It is, however, decidedly common in broken dialogue.

Ham. Go on; | I'll fol | low thee. |
Mar. You shall | not go, | my lord (i. 4. 79).

And this is probably often to be explained by the second speaker breaking in on the first, so that one or two syllables are pronounced simultaneously.

(*c*) Short incomplete lines of various lengths are also found, especially in broken, hurried, or excited dialogue, and at the beginning or end of a speech. They are especially common in this play. Sometimes the gap may be filled up by appropriate action, or by a dramatic pause.

(*d*) Interjections and proper names (especially vocatives), even short questions or commands, are frequently extra-metrical.

And shall | I cou | ple hell? | (O, fie!) | Hold, hold, | my heart (i. 5. 93).

Observe that in nearly every instance an unusual stress or an irregularity comes either after a pause, whether at the beginning of a line or in the middle, or at the end of a line in which there is a break.

5. Apparent Variations

(*a*) *Accentual variations.* Difficulties occasionally arise from the fact that words in Shakespeare's day were sometimes accented in a different way from that of the present day, and the same word often bears a different accent in different places in Shakespeare's own writing. Thus, we say *por'tent*, Shakespeare always *portent'*. On the other hand, we say *complete'*, Shakespeare has sometimes *complete'*, sometimes *com'plete* (i. 4. 52). In effect we must often be guided by the verse in deciding on which syllable of a word the accent should fall, because custom had not yet finally decided in favor of a particular syllable. Speaking broadly, the tendency of the modern pronunciation is to throw the accent far back.

(*b*) *Syllabic variations.* (1) When two vowels come together (as in words ending with *-ion*, *-ius*, *-ious*, and the like) we are in the habit of slurring the first and sometimes of blending it with the preceding consonant; so that we pronounce *ambit-i-on* = *ambishon*. In Shakespeare the vowel in such cases is sometimes slurred and sometimes not, in the same word in different places, — usually the former in the middle of a line, often the latter at the end. In such cases we must be guided simply by ear in deciding whether the vowel is to be slurred or sounded distinctly. And we have to decide in exactly the same way when we are to sound or not sound the terminal *-ed*

of the past participle. So, too, *prayer* is sometimes a monosyllable, sometimes a dissyllable.

> And what's | in *pray* | *ër* but | this two- | fold force,
> To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
> Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up;
> My fault | is past. | But, O, | what form | of *prayer*
> Can serve my turn? (iii. 3. 48–52).

(2) Again, in particular words, a vowel seems to be sometimes mute, sometimes sounded. Thus we have *mem'ry* (i. 5. 96) and *memory* (i. 5. 98); *unnat'ral* (i. 4. 25) and *unnatural* (i. 4. 28).

(3) In a large number of words where a liquid (*l*, *m*, *n*, and especially *r*) comes next to another consonant an indefinite vowel sound is sometimes introduced between the two letters (just as now in many places one may hear the word *helm* pronounced *hellum*), which may be treated as forming a syllable, and sometimes the vowel is actually inserted, as in *thorough* = *through*. A somewhat exceptional instance is

> Lends the | tongue vows: | these bla | zes, *daug* | *hëter* (i. 3. 117).

(4) Conversely, a light vowel sound coming next to a liquid is often sounded lightly and in effect dropped; so that such words as *spirit* (i. 1. 138), *peril*, *quarrel*, are practically monosyllables. (Hence such a form as *parlous* = *perilous*. Cf. i. 3. 102.)

> *Ham.* Perchance | 't will walk | again |
> *Hor.* | *I warrant* (Q 2 *warn't*) | it will (i. 2. 243).

(5) *th* and *v* between two vowels are often almost or entirely dropped and the two syllables run into one: as in the words *whether*, *whither*, *other*, *either*, *ever*, *never*, *even*, *over*. *Heaven* generally, *evil*, *devil* sometimes, are treated as monosyllables. Q 2 prints *deale* in ii. 2. 628.

(6) Vowels separated by a *w* or an *h* are habitually slurred and pronounced practically as one syllable.

(7) *Fire* and similar words, which in common pronunciation are dissyllables (*fi-er*, etc.), are commonly but not always scanned as monosyllables.

(8) Other ordinary contractions, such as *we'll* for *we will*, *th'* for *the* before a vowel, etc., though not shown in the spelling, are frequent.

6. Weak Stresses

The use of weak or intermediate stresses affords one of the chief protections against monotony.

(*a*) Lines in which there are not five strong stresses are very plentiful: *e.g.*,

Absent′ | thee from` | feli′ | city` | awhile′ (v. 2. 358).

In the fifth foot especially, the stress is often extremely slight; such "light" or "weak" endings are particularly characteristic of the later plays.

(*b*) On the other hand, lines in which there are two stressed syllables in one foot are common.

His ca′ | non′ gainst′ | self-` slaugh′ | ter! O′ | God` ! | God′!
(i. 2. 132).

A foot with a double stress is nearly always preceded by a pause, or by a foot with a very weak stress only.

(*c*) It will be observed that there are never fewer than three strong stresses, and that any foot in which there is no strong stress must at any rate have one syllable with a weak stress, and that very often such a foot has two weak stresses, preventing the feeling that the line is altogether too light. Thus, a syllable which is quite unemphatic acquires a certain stress merely by length, as in some of the above cases. And, speaking broadly, a very strong stress in one foot compensates for a weak stress in the neighboring foot.

7. General Hints

(*a*) Often there are many possible ways of scanning a particular line, and the one adopted must depend on the individual taste of the reader. Thus he can frequently choose between § 3 (*b*) and § 5.

(*b*) Irregularities are most common

(1) In passages of emotional excitement.

(2) Before or after pauses.

(3) Where proper names are introduced.

GLOSSARY

a-, a degenerate preposition (1) for *at:* **a-making** (i. 3. 119), **a-gaming** (ii. 1. 58), cf. **at gaming** (iii. 3. 91); (2) for *of:* **John-a-dreams** (ii. 2. 595), cf. *Richard II*, i. 3. 76, "John a Gaunt."

absolute: (1) (v. 1. 148), precise; (2) (v. 2. 111), Osrician for "faultless."

abuse (iv. 7. 51), deception.

act (i. 2. 205), action.

addition (i. 4. 20; ii. 1. 47), that which is added to a man to distinguish him, — name, title, and so, reputation. Cf. *Merry Wives*, ii. 2. 312, "devils' additions, the names of fiends."

admiration (i. 2. 192; iii. 2. 339, 342), astonishment.

aery (ii. 2. 354), an eagle's nest or brood; from the Low Lat. *area*.

affection (iii. 1. 170), passion.

affront (iii. 1. 31), come face to face with.

against (ii. 2. 505), just before.

alarm (iii. 4. 120), sudden attack; from the Italian cry *all' arme*, to arms!

amiss (iv. 5. 18), mischief.

an (1) (i. 5. 19; iii. 4. 122), a form of *on*, in the phrase "an end"; (2) (i. 5. 177; iv. 6. 8; v. 2. 184), *and*, in the special sense of *if*. The form *an* was rarely used in Shakespeare's time. Except in *an't*, it occurs only once in F 1; but modern editors have appropriated it to the conditional sense of the word. *And* or *an* is often strengthened, as in i. 5. 177, by the addition of *if*.

anchor (iii. 2. 229), anchorite, hermit.

anon (ii. 2. 490), immediately; from the A.S. *on án*, lit. "in one" (moment).

antic (1) (v. 2. 352), ancient; (2) (i. 5. 172), fantastic. Probably the second sense is derived from the first, but Murray connects it with the Ital. *antico*, a cavern adorned with grotesques.

appointment (iv. 6. 16), equipment.

approve (i. 1. 29), justify, prove true.

argal (v. 1. 13), a clownish corruption of the Latin *ergo*, therefore.

argument (ii. 2. 372; iii. 2. 149, 242; iv. 4. 54), subject, especially the subject of a drama.

arrant (i. 5. 124; iii. 1. 131), scoundrelly, lit. cowardly; from M.E. *arghen*, A.S. *eargian*, to be cowardly.

arras (ii. 2. 162; iv. 1. 9), tapestry, so called from Arras in Artois, in the north of France.

arrest (ii. 2. 67; v. 2. 343), legal restraint.

article (i. 1. 94), clause in an agreement.

assay (1) (ii. 1. 65), test; (2) (ii. 2. 71), attempt.

assigns (v. 2. 157), accompaniments.

assume (iii. 4. 160), acquire.

at (1) (iv. 3. 46), used by Shakespeare for the earlier *a*, a contraction of the A.S. *on;* (2) (iv. 3. 56), near.

attribute (i. 4. 22), reputation.

avouch (i. 1. 57), proof, testimony.

audit (iii. 3. 82), final account.

bar (i. 2. 14), exclude.
batten (iii. 4. 67), grow fat. Cf. *Coriolanus*, iv. 5. 35, "batten on cold bits," and Milton, *Lycidas*, i. 29, "Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night."
be, a form of *by*, used as a prefix, intensifies and modifies in various ways, often very slight, the tense of the word to which it is attached. Often it simply serves to form a verb, as in **berattle** (ii. 2. 357), belabor; **beshrew** (ii. 1. 113), curse; **bespeak** (ii. 2. 140), speak to, address.
bear (i. 3. 67; iv. 3. 7), carry on, administer. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, ii. 1. 226, "bear it as our Roman actors do."
beaver (i. 2. 229), the movable part of the helmet covering the face; the visor.
bedded (iii. 4. 121), laid flat.
beetle (i. 4. 71), hang over.
bent (ii. 2. 30), inclination; so **at bent** (iv. 3. 47), inclined.
beteem (i. 2. 141), allow.
bias (ii. 1. 65), inclination to one side; from Low Lat. *bifax*, one who looks askew: (1) of a bowl, (2) any preventing tendency. Cf. *King John*, ii. 1. 574, "commodity, the bias of the world."
bilboes (v. 2. 6), iron fetters; from Bilboa, correctly Bilbao, a place of steel manufacture in Spain.
bisson (ii. 2. 529), blind, blinding; probably from A. S. *bi-*, near, and *séon*, to see. Cf. *Coriolanus* (ii. 1. 70), "your bisson conspectuities."
blank (1) (iii. 2. 230), blanch; (2) (iv. i. 42), the white mark in the center of a target.
blazon (i. 5. 21), proclamation.
blench (ii. 2. 626), start.
blister (iii. 4. 44), brand of unchastity.
board (ii. 2. 170), accost, speak to.
bodkin (iii. 1. 76), a small dagger.
bodykins (ii. 2. 554), diminutive of *body*, used in the oath, "God's bodikins."
bore (iv. 6. 26), importance; lit. the caliber, or size of shot.
bourne (iii. 1. 79), boundary.
brainish (iv. 1. 11), brainsick.
brave (ii. 2. 611), befitting, used ironically.
bravery (v. 2. 79), ostentation, bravado.
braz'd (iii. 4. 37), hardened to impudence.
broad (iii. 4. 2.), unrestrained.
broker (i. 3. 127), a go-between or intermediary in love affairs.
brooch (iv. 7. 94), ornament.
bruit (i. 2. 127), announce noisily. Cf. *Macbeth*, v. 7. 22, "By this great clatter one of greatest note seems bruited."
bug (v. 2. 22), bugbear, bogy.
but (ii. 2. 495), merely.
button (i. 3. 40), bud.
buzzers (v. 5. 90), whisperers, tale-bearers.

can (iv. 7. 85), are able, can do.
candied (iii. 2. 65), sugared, flattering.
canker (1) (i. 3. 39), a worm that destroys blossoms; (2) metaphorically (v. 2. 69), destructive element.
capable (1) (iii. 2. 13), able to receive; (2) (iii. 4. 127), susceptible.
cap a pe (i. 2. 200), from head to foot; O. F. *de cap a pie*. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 771, "I am courtier cap a pe."
capital (iv. 7. 7), important.
card (v. 1. 149; v. 2. 114), either a "chart," or the face of a compass, or a card with rules for etiquette, or a player's "part" or "plat"; see notes *ad loc.*
carriage (1) (i. 1. 94), purport; (2) (v. 2. 158), Osrician for the "hanger" of a sword.

cast, noun (iii. 1. 85), surface coloring; cf. "roughcast," the plaster surface of a wall.

cast, vb. (ii. 1. 115), seek for a lost scent — a hunting metaphor.

cataplasm (iv. 7. 144), plaster, poultice.

cautel (i. 3. 15), deceit.

cease (iii. 3. 15), death.

censure (i. 3. 69; i. 4. 35; iii. 2. 82), opinion.

cerement (i. 4. 48), a shroud of waxed linen; from the Lat. *cera*, wax.

chapless (v. 1. 97), lacking the lower jaw.

charácter (1) (i. 3. 59), inscribe; (2) (iv. 7. 52), handwriting

change (i. 2. 163), exchange.

charge (1) (iv. 4. 47), expense; (2) (v. 2. 43), burden, weight.

check (iv. 7. 63), leave its proper prey to follow another (a term in falconry).

cheer (iii. 2. 229), fare; or, possibly, chair.

choler (iii. 2. 315), anger, literally "bile."

chopfallen (v. 1. 212), down in the mouth.

chopine (ii. 2. 447), a kind of shoe or clog, raised above the ground by means of a cork sole or the like; worn about 1600 in Spain and Italy.

chough (1) generally a crow or jackdaw; (2) (v. 2. 89), here only, a clown; spelled *chuff* in *1 Henry IV*, ii. 2. 94. Cf. Cotgrave's *Dictionary*, s. v. *Maschefouyn*, "A chuffe, boor, lobcocke, lozell; one that is fitter to feed with cattell, than to conuerse with men."

circumstance (i. 5. 127; iii. 1. 1; iii. 3. 83), a roundabout course.

clepe (i. 4. 19,) call, name. A.S. *cleopian*. The word, so common in Chaucer, is rare in Elizabethan English. Cf. *Macbeth*, iii. 1. 93; *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 1. 24; *Venus and Adonis*, 995.

climature (i. 1. 125), country *Climate* is similarly used in *Julius Cæsar*, i. 3. 32:

> They are portentous things
> Unto the climate that they point upon.

closet (ii. 1. 77), private apartment.

closely (iii. i. 29), privately, secretly.

cock (iv. 5. 62), corruption of *God*.

coil (iii. 1. 67), either that which is wrapped around, like a coil of rope, a covering; or turmoil, bustle. Cf. *Much Ado*, v. 2. 98, "Yonder's old coil at home."

collateral (iv. 5. 206), indirect.

commend (i. 2. 39), recommend, attest.

commerce (iii. 1. 109), intercourse.

compass (iii. 2. 384), the extent of a voice, the notes which it can take.

competent (i. 1. 90), equivalent.

complexion (i. 4. 27; v. 2. 102), temperament, disposition.

comply (ii. 2. 39; v. 2. 195), be courteous; in the usual sense of *compliment*.

compost (iii. 4. 151), manure.

conceit (1) (ii. 2. 579, 583; iii. 4. 114), imagination; (2) (iv. 5. 145; v. 2. 160), often in the sense of fantastic imagination.

concernancy (v. 2. 128), meaning, point.

conclusion (iii. 4. 195), experiment.

condolement (i. 2. 93), mourning.

confine (i. 1. 155; ii. 2. 252), prison.

congrue (iv. 3. 66), agree, be suitable.

conjunctive (iv. 7. 14), closely united.

conscience (1) (iv. 7. 1), the moral consciousness; (2) (v. 2. 67), morality; (3) (iii. 1. 83), consciousness generally, especially self-consciousness, speculation.

consonancy (ii. 2. 295), agreement.
contagion (iv. 7. 148), poison.
continent, that which contains; (1) (iv. 4. 64), literally, "cover"; (2) (v. 2. 115), metaphorically, "inventory."
contraction (iii. 4. 46), marriage contract.
contriving (iv. 7. 136), plotting.
conversation (iii. 2. 60), intercourse; the sense of the Lat. *conversari*.
cope (iii. 2. 60), encounter.
cote (ii. 2. 329), pass by, outstrip; a technical term in coursing. Cf. Drayton, *Polyolbion*, xxiii. 1115:

> Each man notes
> Which dog first turns the hare,
> Which first the other cotes;

and Turberville, "In coursing at a deer, if one greyhound go endways by another, it is accounted a cote." From Fr. *côtoyer*, to coast along.
couch (v. 1. 245), hide.
counter (iv. 5. 110), in the wrong direction; another technical term of venery, used when a dog follows the scent backwards. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, i. 2. 102, and *Comedy of Errors*, iv. 2. 239, "a hound that runs counter, and yet draws dry-foot well." From the Lat. *contra*, opposite to.
cousin (i. 2. 70), relative outside the immediate family.
cozen (iii. 4. 78), **cozenage** (v. 2. 67), trick, trickery; lit. "call cousin," and so "sponge upon," "beguile." Fr. *cousiner*.
crants (v. 1. 255), a garland, in the special sense of a maiden's funeral garland; Germ. *kranz*. The word is connected with Lat. *corona*, crown. Cf. stage direction to Chapman's *Alphonsus*, "Enter Saxon Mentz, like Clowns with each of them a Mitre with *Corances* on their heads."
crowner (v. 1. 4), coroner.
cry (iii. 2. 289), company; lit. the noise of hounds, and so, a pack of hounds. Cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

> a cry more tuneable
> Was never holla'd to,

and *Coriolanus*, iii. 3. 110, "you common cry of curs."
cue (ii. 2. 60), hint, motive; lit. in stage terminology, the catch-word by which an actor knows his turn to speak. Cf. *Henry V*, iii. 6. 13, "now we speak upon our cue."
curb (iii. 4. 155), bow, bend; Fr. *courber*.

dear (i. 2. 182) is used of anything that touches deeply, even if it yields pain rather than pleasure. Cf. *Richard II*, i. 3. 151, "my dear exile"; *King John*, i. 1. 257, "my dear offence"; *Macbeth*, v. 2. 3, "their dear causes."
defeat (ii. 2. 598), destruction.
delate (i. 2. 38), convey, intrust; Bacon appears to use the word in this sense, but it generally means "accuse."
design (i. 1. 94), point out, mention, designate.
die (i. 3. 128), color, character.
differences (v. 2. 112), personal qualities.
dild (iv. 5. 41), in the phrase "God dild you," is probably a corruption of "God yield you," possibly of "God shield you." This form occurs in *Sir John Oldcastle* (1600), but "God 'ild you" is more usual; Cf. *e.g. Macbeth*, i. 6. 13.
disclose, noun (iii. 1. 174); vb. (v. 1. 310), hatch.
dispatch (i. 5. 75), deprive.
disprize (iii. 1. 72), misprize, undervalue.
distil (i. 2. 204), transform, disintegrate.
document (iv. 5. 178), lesson, object lesson; from Lat. *docere*, teach.

dole (i. 2. 13), grief; from Lat. *dolere*, grieve.

dout (iv. 7. 192), extinguish; a contraction of *do out*, just as *don* is of *do on;* Cf. note on i. 4. 37.

down-gyved (ii. 1. 80) (of stockings), pulled down over the ankles like gyves or fetters. Cf. **gyves.**

drossy (v. 2. 197), mixed with impurities, worthless. The *dross* is the refuse of an ore from which the pure metal has been extracted.

ducat (iii. 4. 24), a gold coin; the Italian *ducato*, from *ducatus* (Duchy of Apulia) in the legend upon it.

eager (1) (i. 5. 69), acid, sour; (2) (i. 4. 2), keen, biting; from O.F. *egre* (Fr. *aigre*), Lat. *acer*, sharp.

ecstasy (ii. 1. 102; iii. 1. 168; iii. 4. 74, 138, 139), excitement, madness; any state of being beside oneself. From Gr. ἐκ = out, στάσις = standing.

edge (iii. 1. 26), stimulation, incitement.

effects (iii. 4. 129), actions. Cf. *Macbeth*, v. 1. 12, "do the effects of watching."

eisel (v. 1. 299), either the corruption of the name of a river, as the Yssel or Weissel; or vinegar. Cf. *Sonnet* cxi, "I will drink potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection." Cf. Chaucer, *Romaunt of the Rose*, 217, "Breed Kneden with eisel strong and egre"; and the eighth prayer in the *Salisbury Primer*, 1555, "O blessed Jesu!... I beseech thee for the bitterness of the aysell and gaul that thou tasted."

emulate (i. 1. 83), emulous, jealous.

enacture (iii. 2. 207), action.

encounter (ii. 2. 164; v. 2. 199), meeting, behavior, dialogue.

entertainment (1) (ii. 2 329), reception, treatment; (2) (i. 3. 64; ii. 2. 392; v. 2. 216), in the special sense of kindly treatment, courtesy.

entreatment (i. 3. 122), conversation, interview.

envious (iv. 7. 174), spiteful; **enviously** (iv. 5. 6), spitefully, petulantly.

escoted (ii. 2. 362), paid, maintained. From O.F. *escotter*, A.S. *scot* = payment, money shot into a common fund, from *scéotan* = to shoot.

espials (iii. 1. 32), spies.

eterne (ii. 2. 512), eternal. Cf. *Macbeth*, iii. 2. 38, "But in them nature's copy's not eterne."

even (ii. 2. 299), exact, precise.

exception (v. 2. 242), dislike; as in the phrase, "to take exception."

excrement (iii. 4. 121), hair. Cf. *Comedy of Errors*, ii. 2. 79, "Why is Time so niggard of hair, being as it is so plentiful an excrement?"

expostulate (ii. 2. 86), converse, expound.

express (ii. 2. 317), expressive, significant.

extent (ii. 2. 390), behavior. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, iv. 1. 57:

> In this uncivil and unjust extent
> Against thy peace.

extravagant (i. 1. 154), wandering beyond confines.

eyas (ii. 2. 355), nestling; a term of falconry for a young hawk just taken from the nest. Fr. *niais*.

fantasy (i. 1. 23; iv. 4. 61), imagination, caprice.

fardel (iii. 1. 76), bundle, burden; said to be from the Arabic *fardah*, through Fr. *farde*.

farm (iv. 4. 20), rent.

fashion (ii. 2. 387), form.

favour (1) (iv. 5. 189), attractiveness; (2) (v. 1. 215), look, appearance.

fay (ii. 2. 271), faith.

feature (iii. 1. 167), figure.

fee (1) (iv. 4. 22), land held as private property; (2) (i. 4. 65; ii. 2. 73), payment, value. From A.S. *feoh*, cattle, property, connected with Lat. *pecus*, *pecunia*.

fell (v. 2. 61), cruel.

felly (ii. 2. 517), the rim of a wheel.

fetch (ii. 1. 38), stratagem. Cf. *King Lear*, ii. 4. 89:

> Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary?
> They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches.

figure (i. 1. 41, 109; i. 2. 199; iii. 4. 104), form, shape.

flaw (v. 1. 239), a gust of wind. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, iv. 4. 35:

> As humorous as winter and as sudden
> As flaws congealed in the spring of day.

flush (iii. 3. 81), lusty, self-confident.

flushing (i. 2. 155), either a rush of water or a redness.

foil (v. 2. 265, 266, etc.): (1) a blunted rapier, from *foil*, defeat: (2) the gold-leaf used to set off a jewel; from Lat. *folium*, leaf. Hence, whatever serves to set off anything else by contrast.

fond (i. 5. 99; v. 2. 200), foolish.

fordo (ii. 1. 103; v. 1. 244), destroy.

forgery (iv. 7. 89), invention, imagination.

forward (iii. 1. 7), disposed.

free (iii. 2. 252), innocent.

fret (1) (iii. 2. 388), vex, chafe, with an allusion to the *fret* or stop in a musical instrument. From A.S. *fretan*, short for *for-etan* (*for*, entirely; *etan*, eat), to eat away, wear away. Cf. *King Lear*, i. 4. 307, "fret channels in her cheeks"; (2) (ii. 2. 313), ornament; from A.S. *frætwian*. Cf. *Cymbeline*, ii. 4. 88:

> The roof of the chamber
> With golden cherubims is fretted.

function (ii. 2. 582), bodily activity.

fust (iv. 4. 39), grow mouldy; lit. "taste of the cask." From O.F. *fuste*, a stick, a cask; Lat. *fustis*, a stick.

gain-giving (v. 2. 226), misgiving, the sense of *gain* being adverse, as in *gainsay*.

garb (ii. 2. 388), outward fashion.

gentry (ii. 2. 22; v. 2. 114), courtesy.

gib (iii. 4. 190), a tom-cat. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, 1. 2. 83, "As melancholy as a gib-cat."

goblin (i. 4. 40; v. 2. 22), a mischievous spirit, from Low Lat. *gobelinus*, dimin. of *cobalus* = demon.

God-a-mercy (ii. 2. 172), God have mercy.

gorge (v. 1. 207), stomach.

gracious (i. 2. 164; v. 2. 85), benign, blessed.

grained (iii. 4. 90), ingrained, dyed in grain, *i.e.* of a fast color. M.E. *engreynen*, coined from Fr. *en* (Lat. *in*), and O. F. *graine*, "the seed of herbs, also grain, wherewith cloth is died *in grain*, scarlet die, scarlet in graine" (Cotgrave). From Lat. *granum*.

green (i. 3. 101), foolish; **greenly** (iv. 5. 83) foolishly.

gross (iv. 4. 46), obvious.

gules (ii. 2. 479), red, a heraldic term. Cf. *Timon of Athens*, iv. 3. 59, "With man's blood paint the ground, gules, gules"; probably from the open mouth of the heraldic lion. Lat. *gula* = throat.

gyves (iv. 7. 21), fetters; a Celtic word. Cf. Irish *gabh* = take; con. with Lat. *capere* = to take.

hangers (iv. 2. 157), straps attaching the sword to the belt.
happily (ii. 2. 403), haply, perhaps.
harbinger (i. 1. 122), forerunner; M.E. *herbergeour*, O.F. *herberg-er*, one who provided lodgings for a man of rank.
hatchment (iv. 5. 213), a coat of arms hung up as a sign of the death of the owner.
haunt (iv. 1. 18), publicity. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 14. 54:

Dido and her Æneas shall want troops.
And all the haunt be ours.

hautboy (iii. 2. 145, stage dir.), a wooden wind-instrument resembling the modern oboe.
havoc (v. 2. 375), slaughter; said to be from A.S. *hafoc*, hawk, so that "Cry havoc!" is literally "Cry ware hawk!"
head (iv. 5. 101), armed force.
hectic (iv. 3. 68), fever.
hent (iii. 3. 88), grip; or perhaps way, course. The word is used in western counties for the course of a plowshare.
heyday (iii. 4. 69), wildness, wantonness.
his (i. 4. 26, 38, etc.), its.
honest (i. 1. 16), worthy (used with condescension).
honesty (1) (ii. 2. 204), becoming, befitting; (2) (iii. 1. 108), chastity.
hoodman blind (iii. 4. 78), blindman's buff.
hugger-mugger (iv. 5. 84), secrecy.
humour (ii. 2. 12), disposition. The four chief types of disposition — the sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, melancholic — were supposed to depend upon the preponderance of various "humours" in the blood.
husbandry (i. 3. 77), thrift. Cf. *Macbeth*, ii. 1. 4, "There's husbandry in heaven, their candles are all out."
impartment (i. 4. 59), communication.
impasted (ii. 2. 481), made into paste, clotted.
imperious (v. 1. 236), imperial.
implorator (i. 3. 129), one who implores or solicits.
impone (v. 2. 155, 171), lay upon; Osrician for "wager."
import (1) (i. 2. 23), purport; (2) (iv. 3. 65; v. 2. 21), imply; (3) (iii. 2. 149, etc.), signify.
imposthume (iv. 4. 27), abscess.
impress (i. 1. 75), enforced service. Cf. modern "press-gang."
incapable (iv. 7. 179), unable to understand. Cf. **capable**.
incorporal (iii. 4. 116), immaterial.
indenture (v. 1. 119), agreement, a legal term. Agreements made in duplicate were cut with indented edges to fit one another.
index (iii. 4. 52), explanatory prologue.
indifferent (ii. 2. 3), of moderate estate, neither high nor low.
indue (iv. 7. 180), furnish.
infusion (v. 2. 119), essential qualities.
ingenious (v. 1. 271), belonging to the intellect, wise.
inhibition (ii. 2. 346), prohibition; used technically for a prohibition of theatrical performances by authority.
inoculate (iii. 1. 119), graft, bud.
instance (iii. 2. 192), motive.
instant, adj. (i. 5. 71), immediate; adv. (i. 5. 94), immediately.
investment (i. 3. 128), dress.

jealousy (ii. 1. 113; iv. 5. 19), suspicion.
jig (ii. 2. 522), facetious ballad.
jowl (v. 1. 84), thrust, throw.
jump (i. 1. 65; v. 2. 386), exactly.

keep (ii. 1. 8), dwell.
kettle (v. 2. 286), kettledrum.
kibe (v. 1. 153), a sore on the heel, chilblain. Cf. *King Lear*, i. 5. 9, "If a man's brains were in 's heels, were 't not in danger of kibes."
kindless (ii. 2. 609), unnatural.

lard (iv. 5. 37; v. 2. 20), enrich; lit. fatten.
lazar-like (i. 5. 72), like a leper.
learn (v. 2. 9), teach.
let (1) (iv. 5. 54), allow, from A.S. *lætan*; (2) (i. 4. 85), hinder; from A.S. *lettan*.
liberal (iv. 7. 171), licentious, free-spoken.
limed (iii. 3. 68), caught, as with bird-lime.
list, noun (1) (i. 1. 98; i. 2. 32), catalogue, number; (2) (iv. 5. 99), border, boundary. The idea common to both meanings appears to be that of a strip.
list, vb. (1) (i. 5. 177), desire, con. with *lust;* (2) (i. 3. 30; i. 5. 22), listen.
loggats (v. 1. 100), a game, something like bowling, in which wooden logs are thrown at a "jack." Cf. Jonson, *Tale of a Tub*, iv. 6:

Now are they tossing of his legs and arms
Like loggats at a pear tree.

luxury (i. 5. 83), lust.

maimed (v. 1. 241), incomplete.
main (iv. 4.15), chief power.
mainly (iv. 7. 9), in the highest degree.
mallecho (iii. 2. 147), mischief; the Span. *malhecho*. Cf. Shirley, *Gentleman of Venice*, "Be humble, thou man of mallecho, or thou diest."
marry (i. 4, 13, etc.), an exclamation denoting indignation, scorn, or vehement assertion; originally an invocation of the B. V. Mary, of whose name the word is a corrupt form. Cf. *Richard II*, i. 4. 16; iv. 1. 114.
mart (i. 1. 74), traffic.
mass (v. 1. 62), the communion service in the Catholic church: from the concluding words of the priest, *Ite, missa est*.
matin (i. 5. 89), morning.
mazzard (v. 1. 97), head, skull; used again in *Othello*, ii. 3. 155.
merely (i. 2. 137), entirely.
miching (iii. 2. 147), secret; lit. sneaking. Cf. Florio, *Ital. Dict.*, "*Acciapinare:* to miche, to shrug or sneak in some corner"; and *Prompt. Parv.*, "Mychyn, or stelyn pryuely."
milch (ii. 2. 540), moist; not confined to milk. Cf. Drayton, *Polyolbion*, xiii. 171, "exhaling the milch dew."
mineral (iv. 1. 26), a mine or vein of metal. Cf. Hall, *Satires*, bk. vi:

Shall it now be a wild fig in a wall,
Or fired brimstone in a mineral?

mobled (ii. 2. 525), muffled, wearing a mob-cap or "clout" (l. 529). Cf. Shirley, *Gentleman of Venice*, "The moon does mobble up herself."
model (v. 2. 50), copy.
modesty (ii. 2. 290; iii. 2. 18), reserve, simplicity.
moiety (i. 1. 90), portion, lit. half.
mole (i. 4. 24), blemish.
mope (iii. 4. 81), be dull, without activity.
mortal (1) (iv. 4. 51; iv. 5. 60), subject to death; and so (2) (ii. 2. 539; iii. 1. 67), human; (3) (iv. 7. 143), causing death.
mortise (iii. 3. 20), fasten. A *mortise* is a hole in a piece of wood into which a projecting part of another piece is fitted.
mountebank (iv. 7. 142), quack; the Ital. *montambanco*, lit. one who mounts a bench to proclaim his wares.
mouse (iii. 4. 182), term of endearment.

mow (ii. 2. 301), grimace.
muddy-mettled (ii. 2. 593), sluggish-natured. *Mettle* is "substance," "temper"; another form of *metal*. No distinction is made between the two words in old editions, in either spelling or use.
mutine (v. 2. 6), mutineer, rebel.

naked (iv. 7. 44), unarmed.
napkin (v. 2. 299), handkerchief.
native (1) (i. 2. 47), naturally related to; (2) (iii. 1. 84), natural.
nerve (i. 4. 83), muscle, the "sinew" of modern English, whereas the Elizabethan *sinew* often corresponds rather to our *nerve*.
nonce (iv. 7. 16), always in the phrase **for the nonce**. This is the A.S. *for then anes*, where *then* is the dat. of the article, and *anes* = once. Thus, "for the once, for the occasion" (Skeat).

obsequious (i. 2. 92), funereal.
occurrents (v. 2. 368), occurrences, events.
o'erreach (1) (iii. 1. 17), overtake; (2) (v. 1. 87), outwit, with a punning allusion to the literal sense.
o'ersized (ii. 2. 484), smeared over.
o'er-teemed (ii. 2. 531), exhausted with child-bearing.
omen (i. 1. 123), a fatal event foretold by a sign. More usually the word means the sign itself, but not in Shakespeare.
operant (iii. 2. 184), operative, active.
opposite (1) (iii. 2. 230), obstacle; (2) (v. 2. 62), opponent.
ordinant (v. 2. 48), ruling, guiding.
ore (iv. 1. 25), a mineral containing precious metal.
orisons (iii. 1. 89), prayers; from Fr. *oraison*, Lat. *oratio*.
ostentation (iv. 5. 209), display, pageant.

paddock (iii. 4. 190), toad. Cf. *Macbeth*, i. 1. 9. The word is also used in various parts of England for a frog.
pajock (iii. 2. 295), probably peacock. Or it may mean ragamuffin, tatterdemalion, the "king of shreds and patches," of iii. 4. 102. Mr. Ingleby quotes *patchocke* as applied by Spenser to a ragged Irishman.
pall (v. 2. 9), lose vigor.
palmy (i. 1. 113), glorious, the palm being an emblem of superiority. Cf. v. 2. 40, and *Timon of Athens*, v. 1. 12, "You shall see him a palm in Athens again and flourish with the highest."
paragon (ii. 2. 320), model, pattern; from Span. *para con*, in comparison with.
pardon (i. 2. 56; iii. 2. 329), leave to depart.
parle (i. 1. 62), parley, conference; from Fr. *parler*, speak, a military term. Cf. *Richard II*, i. 1. 192; iii. 3. 33.
part (iv. 7. 74; v. 2. 116), talent, quality.
partisan (i. 1. 140), halberd, battle-axe; perhaps from the O.H.G. *partâ*, axe.
pass, noun (iv. 7. 139; v. 2. 61, 173), thrust, bout (at fencing). So the vb. **to pass** (v. 2. 309).
passage (v. 2. 409), death.
passion (1) (ii. 2. 541, 578), strong feeling; (2) (iv. 5. 188), suffering.
peak (ii. 2. 594), mope, be irresolute.
peculiar (iii. 3. 11), individual.
perdy (iii. 2. 304), corruption of *par Dieu*.
periwig-pated (iii. 2. 10). A periwig is false hair. Cf. Fr. *perruque*, Ital. *perucca;* con. with Ital. *piluccare*, pull out hair. Lat. *pilus*, a hair.

perpend (ii. 2. 105), consider.
peruse (iv. 7. 137), examine closely.
petard (iii. 4. 207), a case or shell filled with explosives.
picked (v. 1. 151), refined, dainty.
pioner (i. 5. 163), military engineer, sapper.
pitch (iii. 1. 86), importance, lit. height; a metaphor from falconry, in which the word denoted the height to which a hawk soared before it swooped. Cf. *2 Henry VI*, ii. 1. 5:

But what a point, my lord, your falcon made,
And what a pitch she flew above the rest."

plausive (i. 4. 30), plausible.
plurisy (iv. 7. 118), properly *pleurisy*, an affection of the lungs, from the Gr. πλευζά, but treated as if it meant a "plethora" or fullness of blood, and spelled as if from Lat. *plus*, more.
point (i. 2. 200), summit of perfection, in the phrase *at point*, *i.e.* perfectly ready. Cf. *Macbeth*, iv. 3. 135.
politic (iv. 5. 196), political, statesmanlike.
poll (iv. 5. 196), head.
porpentine (i. 5. 20), porcupine.
posset (i. 5. 68), a hot thick drink, generally made of curdled milk. The phrase "eat a posset" occurs in *Merry Wives*, v. 5. 180. Cf. also *Macbeth*, ii. 2. 6.
posy (iii. 2. 162), motto on a ring, a corruption of *poesy*. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, v. 1. 148:

A ring . . . whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife.

power (iv. 4. 9), armed force.
practice (iv. 7. 66, 139), stratagem, treachery, plot.
precurse (i. 1. 121), forerunning, omen.
pregnant (ii. 2. 212; iii. 2. 66), apt, quick, ready.
prenominate (ii. 1. 43), beforementioned.
present (iv. 3. 67), immediate.
pressure (i. 5. 100; iii. 2. 27), impression, character.
prevent (ii. 2. 305), anticipate.
primy (i. 5. 7), in its prime, springlike, youthful. Cf. *Sonnet* iii, "the lovely April of her prime."
probation (i. 1. 156), proof.
process (1) (i. 5. 37; iii. 3. 29), proceeding, course of events. Cf. *Richard III*, iv. 3. 32, "tell the process of their death"; (2) (iv. 3. 65), order, decree.
progress (iv. 3. 33), royal journey in state.
proof (1) (iii. 2. 179; iv. 7. 113, 155), trial; (2) (ii. 2. 512), strength. Cf. *Macbeth*, i. 2. 54, "Bellona's bridegroom, lapped in proof." So too the adj. (iii. 4. 38), and the participle **unapproved** (i. 1. 96).
property (ii. 1. 103; v. 1. 76), quality.
puffed (i. 3. 49; iv. 4. 49), inflated.
pursy (iii. 4. 153), fat and breathless.
push (v. 1. 318), impulse, setting in motion.
put on (1) (i. 3. 94), told to; (2) (iv. 7. 132; v. 2. 394), set on, instigate; (3) (v. 2. 408), tested.

quaintly (ii. 1. 31), cleverly, artfully.
quality (ii. 2. 263), actor's profession.
quarry (v. 2. 375), a heap of dead game; Fr. *curée*, the entrails given to the hounds, a technical term of sport. Cf. *Macbeth*, iv. 3. 206.
question (ii. 2. 356), conversation. Cf. notes *ad loc.* and *As You Like It*, iii. 4. 39,

"I met the duke yesterday, and had much question with him."

questionable (i. 4. 43), inviting question or discussion.

quick, noun (ii. 2. 626; iv. 7. 124), sensitive flesh.

quick, adj. (v. 1. 137, 274, 302), alive.

quiddity (v. 1. 107), subtlety; from Med. Lat. *quidditas*, the "whatness" or nature of a thing, a scholastic term; and so "a subtle scholastic distinction."

quietus (iii. 1. 75), discharge; a legal term for the acquittance given by the exchequer at the settlement of an account. Cf. *Sonnet* cxxvi:

Her audit, though delayed, answered must be,
And her quietus is to render thee.

quillet (v. 1. 108), trick, esp. in argument; from Lat. *quidlibet*, anything you will.

quintessence (ii. 2. 321), an extract of a thing containing its chief qualities; so, the purest part of a thing. Cf. *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 147:

The quintessence of every sprite
Heaven would in little show.

From Lat. *quinta essentia*, fifth essence, the first four being the four elements.

quit (v. 2. 68, 280), requite.

quote (ii. 1. 112), observe. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, iv. 5. 233:

I have with exact view perused thee, Hector,
And quoted joint by joint.

rack (ii. 2. 506), cloud.

rank (iv. 4. 22), great, literally, luxuriant. Cf. iii. 4. 152.

rash (v. 1. 284), quick to act, explosive.

ravel (iii. 4. 186), loosen; woven or twisted things are said to "ravel" when the strands part. Cf. *Macbeth*, ii. 2. 37: "Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleave of care."

razed (iii. 2. 288), streaked, slashed. Cf. Holme, *Academy of Armory*, bk. iii, ch. i, p. 14: "Pinked or raised shooes, have the over leather's grain part cut into roses, or other devices."

reck (i. 3. 51), care for, mind.

recorder (iii. 2. 303, 360), a kind of small flute. Cf. Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, p. 246,

rede (i. 3. 51), counsel.

reechy (iii. 4. 184), stinking, lit. smoky.

regard (1) (iv. 7. 76), estimation, opinion; (2) (iii. 1. 87), consideration; (3) (ii. 2. 79), in the phrase "on such regards"; on such conditions.

region, noun (ii. 2. 509), the sky, properly a division of the sky according to the science of the Roman augurs; so too the adj. (ii. 2. 607). Cf. *Sonnet* xxxiii, "The region cloud hath masked him from me now."

relative (ii. 2. 633), pertinent, cogent.

relish (iii. 1. 119), smack.

replication (iv. 2. 13), reply.

requiem (v. 1. 260), a hymn sung for the dead; from Lat. *requies*, rest.

respect (iii. 1. 68; iii. 2. 193), consideration.

retrograde (i. 2. 114), contrary.

return (i. 1. 91), fall to, without any idea of previous possession.

rhapsody (iii. 4. 48), a collection of meaningless words. Cf. Florio's *Montaigne*, p. 68, ed. 1603, "This concerneth not those mingle-mangles of many kindes of stuffe, or, as the Grecians call them, rapsodies." The Gr. ῥαψῳδός is properly "one who strings songs together, a reciter of epic poetry."

rival (i. 1. 13), associate. Cf. the use of *rivality* in *Antony and Cleopatra*, iii. 5. 8, "Caesar

having made use of him in the wars against Pompey, presently denied him rivality."

robustious (iii. 2. 10), sturdy. Cf. *Henry V*, iii. 7. 159.

romage (i. 1. 107), bustle.

rood (iii. 4. 14), cross, crucifix, the same word as "rod."

round (iii. 1. 191; ii. 4. 5), plain-spoken. Cf. *Othello*, i. 3. 90, "A round unvarnished tale."

rouse (i. 2. 127; i. 4. 8; ii. 1. 58), a fit of drunkenness; the Danish *ruus*, intoxication. The word, however, has no connection with *carouse*.

row (ii. 2. 438), stanza, verse.

rub (iii. 1. 65), obstacle, lit. roughness or inequality in the ground, especially on a bowling green. Cf. *Richard II*, iii. 4. 4, "'T will make me think the world is full of rubs."

sable (1) (i. 2. 240; ii. 2. 474), black; (2) (iv. 7. 81; iii. 2. 137), sable fur.

sallet (ii. 2. 462), spiciness, indecency. The same word as salad.

sanctuarize (iv. 7. 127), protect.

sans (iii. 4. 79), without; a French word.

saw (i. 5. 100), maxim. Cf. *As You Like It*, ii. 7. 156, "wise saws and modern instances."

'Sblood (ii. 2. 384), by God's blood.

scarf, vb. (v. 2. 13), fling on like a scarf. Cf. *Macbeth*, iii. 2. 46–47:

> Come seeling night,
> Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day.

sconce (v. 1. 110), head.

scope (i. 1. 68; i. 2. 37), extent, range of action. From Gr. σκοπός, mark to aim at.

scrimer (iv. 7. 101), fencer; the Fr. *escrimeur*.

season (1) (i. 2. 192; ii. 1. 28), qualify, by throwing in an ingredient; (2) (iii. 2. 219; iii. 3. 86), mature, ripen.

secure (i. 5. 61), free from care or apprehension.

seize (i. 1. 89), a legal term, to take *seisin* or possession.

sensible (i. 1. 57), able to be perceived by the senses.

sensibly (iv. 5. 150), feelingly, keenly.

sere (ii. 2. 237), the catch in the mechanism of a gun which prevents it from going off until released by the trigger.

sergeant (v. 2. 347), bailiff.

set (i. 3. 122; iv. 3. 64), value.

shard (v. 1. 254), fragment of pottery.

shark (i. 1. 98), gather together without selection, as a shark collects every kind of fish into its maw.

shent (iii. 2. 416), reproached, put to shame.

short (iv. 1. 18), in the phrase **keep short**, restrain. So *take up short* in *Henry V*, ii. 4. 72.

siege (iv. 7. 77), rank. Cf. *Othello*, i. 2. 22, "men of royal siege."

simple (iv. 7. 145), medicinal herb; orig. a single element in a compound medicine. Cf. *As You Like It*, iv. 1. 16, "a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples."

sith (iv. 4. 45), since; both forms are short for *sithence*.

slander (i. 3. 132), disgrace, waste, spoil. Cf. *Much Ado*, ii. 3. 47:

> Tax not so bad a voice
> To slander music any more than once.

sledded (i. 1. 63), either "borne on sleds or sledges," or "heavily weighted." Cf. *sledge-hammer*.

sliver (iv. 7. 174), small branch, twig. Cf. the use of the verb in *Macbeth*, iv. 1. 28, "Slips of yew, sliver'd in the moon's eclipse." From A.S. *slīfan*, to cleave.

sort (1) (i. 1. 109), either "suit," "befit," or "turn out," "fall out"; (2) (ii. 2. 273), rank, rate.
spill (iv. 5. 20), destroy.
splenitive (v. 1. 284), passionate.
springes (i. 3. 115; v. 2. 317), snares.
station (iii. 4. 58), attitude, bearing.
statist (v. 2. 33), statesman; used again in *Cymbeline*, ii. 4. 16.
still (ii. 2. 42; iv. 7. 117), always, constantly.
stithy (iii. 2. 79), anvil, smithy.
stomach (i. 1. 100), courage.
stop (iii. 2. 76, 376, 381), the mechanism for regulating the passage of air in a wind instrument.
stoup (v. 1. 68; v. 2. 278), a drinking vessel.
strike (i. 1. 162), exert an evil influence.
stuck (iv. 7. 162), a thrust in fencing; the Italian *stoccado*.
succession (ii. 2. 366), future.
supervise (v. 2. 23), inspection, reading.
suppliance (i. 3. 9), diversion, pastime, that which supplies or fills up a vacant moment.
'Swounds (ii. 2. 604; v. 1. 297), by God's wounds.
swounds (v. 2. 319), swoons.

table (i. 5. 98; ii. 5. 107), tablet, or memorandum book; so **table-book** (ii. 2. 136).
take (i. 1. 163), enchant. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 118 "daffodils that . . . take the winds of March with beauty."
target (ii. 2. 334), shield.
tarre (ii. 2. 370), set on, originally to incite dogs to fight. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3. 392, "Pride alone must tarre the mastiffs on."
temper (v. 2. 339), mix.
tend (1) (iii. 1. 170), have a tendency; (2) (i. 3. 83; iv. 3. 47; iii. 2. 216), attend.
tender, noun (i. 3. 99, 103, 106), offer; vb. (1) (i. 3. 107; iv. 3. 43), treat tenderly, take care of; (2) (i. 3. 109), show. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 826, "I 'll . . . tender your persons to his presence."
tent (ii. 2. 626), search, prove, try; so the noun in *Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 2. 16, and elsewhere.
term (i. 1. 103), mode of acting.
tetter (i. v. 71), a thickening of the skin in disease.
thews (i. 3. 12), muscles, strength.
thought (iii. 1. 85; iv. 5. 188), melancholy, brooding.
tickle (ii. 2. 337), unstable, easily moved.
tinct (iii. 4. 91), color.
top, vb. (iv. 7. 89), surpass.
touch (iv. 5. 207), implicate.
toward (i. 1. 71; v. 2. 376), at hand.
toy (1) (iv. 5. 18), trifle; (2) (i. 3. 6; i. 4. 75), idle fancy.
travel (ii. 2. 343), go on tour in the provinces; used technically of theatrical companies.
traveller (iii. 1. 80), explorer, discoverer.
trick, noun (iv. 4. 61), plaything. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, ii. 1. 51, "A very trick for them to play at will."
trick, vb. (ii. 2. 479), adorn, properly a heraldic term; "a *trick* being a delineation of arms in which the colors are distinguished by their technical marks, without any colour being laid on" (Dyce).
tropically (iii. 2. 247), metaphorically, from Gr. τρόπος, a figure of speech.
truepenny (i. v. 150), true, honest fellow.
trumpet (i. 1. 150), trumpeter.
truncheon (i. 2. 104), staff.
tyrannically (ii. 2. 356), violently, as the part of the tyrant was played in the mysteries. Cf. iii. 2. 15, "It out-herods Herod," and see note *ad loc.*

umbrage (v. 2. 125), shadow.
unaneled (i. 5. 77), without the rite of extreme unction or anointing, a sacrament in the Catholic Church. Cf. Sir T. More, "The extreme unction, or anelynge, and confirmacion, he sayed be no sacraments of the church."
unbated (iv. 7. 39; v. 2. 328), unblunted, without a button (cf. *foil*); to *bate* is to abate, diminish, and so to "blunt." cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, i. 1. 6, "bate his scythe's keen edge."
uncharge (iv. 7. 68), fail to accuse, acquit.
unction (iv. 7. 142), ointment.
ungracious (i. 3. 47), graceless.
unhouselled (i. 5. 77), without the sacrament; *housel* is from A.S. *hûsel*, lit. sacrifice.
union (v. 2. 283, 337), an especially fine pearl; probably from Lat. *unus* in the sense of "unique."
unpregnant of (ii. 2. 595), unquickened by.
unreclaimed (ii. 2. 34), untamed.
unsifted (i. 3. 102), untried.
unvalued (i. 3. 19), without high rank.
use (i. 2. 134; iii. 4. 163, 168), habit, custom.

vail (i. 2. 70), lower. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, i. 1. 28, "vailing her high-top lower than her ribs."
valanced (ii. 2. 442), fringed, lit. with drapery; metaphorically, "with a beard."
validity (iii. 2. 199), value, effect.
ventage (iii. 2. 373), a hole in a musical instrument for the passage of air.
very (1) (ii. 2. 49), veritable, real; (2) (iii. 4. 137; iv. 7. 78; v. 1. 119), mere.
virtue (iv. 5. 155; iv. 7. 145), power, efficacy.
voice (v. 2. 368), vote.

wake, vb. (i. 4. 8), revel by night. Cf. *Sonnet* lxi, "For thee watch I while thou dost wake elsewhere." A *wake* is properly the Vigilia, or eve of the dedication of a church, during which watch was kept in it; then the annual feast of dedication.
wanton (v. 2. 310), favored child.
warrantise (v. 1. 250), warrant.
wassail (i. 4. 9), revelry; from A.S. *waes hael*, be of health, a formula used in drinking a toast.
watch (ii. 2. 148), wakefulness.
wharf (i. 5. 33), bank.
wholesome (iii. 2. 328, 333), sane.
windlass (ii. 1. 65), a winding, circuitous course; so, a subtle stratagem. Cf. Golding, Ovid, *Met.* bk. vii:

> Like a wily fox he runs not forth directly out,
> Nor makes a windlasse over all the champion fields about;

and *Mirror for Magistrates:*

> Which by slie drifts and windlaces aloof,
> They brought about.

wit (ii. 2. 90), wisdom.
withal (i. 3. 28), with.
woundless (iv. 1. 44), invulnerable.
writ (ii. 2. 420), writing, especially dramatic writing. Cf. note *ad loc*, and *Titus Andronicus*, ii. 3. 264:

> this fatal writ
> The complot of this timeless tragedy.

yaw (v. 2. 120), stagger, move unsteadily; used especially of ships. Massinger, *Very Woman*, iii. 5, has the substantive, "O, the yaws that she will make! Look to your stern, dear mistress, and steer right." From the Scand. *gaga*, to bend backwards, probably a reduplicated form of *go*.
yesty (v. 2. 199), frothy.

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THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

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PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

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Printed in the United States of America

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INTRODUCTION

1. LITERARY HISTORY OF THE PLAY

The *Tragedy of Macbeth*, like most of Shakespeare's later plays, was not printed separately in quarto form during his lifetime. It first appeared in the collected edition issued by John Heminge and Henry Condell in 1623, seven years after the poet's death. Here it stands between *Julius Cæsar* and *Hamlet*. In the preface to this edition, known as the First Folio, Heminge and Condell claim to have taken great care to present an accurate text of the plays, "absolute in their numbers as he conceived them." But it would not be safe to put overmuch confidence in this boast. The text of *Macbeth*, in particular, is very unsatisfactory. It is full of printer's errors. Verse-passages are printed as prose, or cut up into irregular lines without regard to metre. And in many places the original sense has been reduced to nonsense.[1] Some of these mistakes were corrected in the Second Folio of 1632; some have been emended by the ingenuity of Theobald and his fellow commentators; others are perhaps beyond the reach of scholarship.

It is improbable that the version of the play from which the First Folio text was taken was in the state in which Shakespeare left it. Opinions differ as to the extent to which it may have been modified. The Clarendon Press editors think that it had been freely touched up by Thomas Middleton. They profess to be able to trace his hand in certain rhyming tags and passages "not in Shakespeare's manner." Attempts in a similar direction have been made by Mr. F. G. Fleay.[2] Middleton was a younger contemporary of Shakespeare's, and wrote for the King's Company between 1615 and 1624. If it was found necessary during that period to make any alterations in *Macbeth*, it would have been nat-

[1] Instances of the state of the First Folio text will be found in the notes on i. 1. 10; i. 3. 38; ii. 2. 2; ii. 2. 16.

[2] See the *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society* for 1874; Mr. Fleay's *Shakespeare Manual*, p 245, and a later paper in *Anglia*, vol. vii. On the passages attributed to Middleton by these critics see Appendices E, F, and G.

ural enough to intrust the task to him. But I cannot believe that it is possible to disentangle such alterations from the original stuff of the piece; and, in spite of Coleridge, a criticism that can attribute the Porter's speech in act ii. sc. 3 to any other than Shakespeare appears to me strangely untrustworthy.[1] It is not unlikely, however, that the First Folio was printed from a copy of *Macbeth* that had been "cut" and "written up" for stage purposes.[2] This theory would account for the unusual shortness of the play;[3] for certain discrepancies in the incidents;[4] and for the number of incomplete lines, which may very well be due to the excision of speeches or parts of speeches.[5] I think also that there has been some tampering with the witch scenes by the introduction of a superfluous personage, Hecate, and of a few lines lyrical in character and incongruous to the original conception of the weird sisters. This condemnation would cover act iii. sc. 5, and act iv. sc. 1. ll. 39–43; 125–132. These passages are very likely the work of Middleton, for they closely resemble in style certain scenes in a play of his called *The Witch*.[6] This play was discovered in MS. in 1778, and its importance was at once observed, and perhaps exaggerated, by Shakespearian critics. Steevens assumed that *The Witch* was written before *Macbeth*, and inferred from certain parallels between the two plays that Shakespeare borrowed hints from his fellow-dramatist. A saner scholarship has, however, led to the conclusion that *The Witch* was probably not written before 1613, and consequently that Middleton was the borrower. Having written his own play, he may have interpolated a few lines in a similar style into *Macbeth*, with the object, perhaps, of introducing a musical element. It is noteworthy that in the stage-directions to two of the doubtful passages appear the titles of songs which are given in full in *The Witch*.[7]

Three possible dates have been suggested for the original production of *Macbeth*. The latest of these is 1610. It depends upon the testimony of one Simon Forman, an astrologer. Forman was in the habit of keeping a manuscript book, and entering in it his

[1] See Appendix F.

[2] Similar instances of such stage-versions are probably to be seen in the Folio *Hamlet* and the First Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet*.

[3] *Macbeth* has 1993 lines; the only play that is shorter is *Comedy of Errors*, which has 1770. The longest play, *Antony and Cleopatra*, has 3964, and the average length is 2857.

[4] See notes on i. 2. 53; i. 3. 73; i. 3. 108; iii. 6. 49.

[5] See Essay on Metre, § 5 (iii).

[6] See Appendix E, and the notes on the doubtful passages.

[7] See Appendix B.

playhouse impressions. He records a performance of *Macbeth* at the Globe on April 20, 1610. From the description he gives, it is clear that what he saw was Shakespeare's play, and that in its main outlines it was identical with the version in the Folio.[1] But there is no proof that Forman was at the first performance; revivals were frequent on the Elizabethan stage; and the weight of evidence is in favor of an earlier date. This can hardly be later than 1607, for in *The Puritan*, published in that year, occurs a manifest allusion to Banquo's ghost. It is in act iv. sc. 1: "Instead of a jester we 'll have a ghost in a white sheet sit at the upper end of the table." It is worth noting that in the same year William Warner added to the new edition of his *Albion's England* a history of Macbeth, as if public attention had been recently called to the subject.[2] On the other hand, the constant reference throughout the play to James I makes it practically certain that it was produced after his accession in March, 1603. The interest taken by this king in witchcraft is notorious; the vision of Macbeth in act iv. sc. 1 is a scarcely veiled tribute to one who traced his descent from Banquo; and a passage in sc. 3 of the same act is as obviously inspired by the "touching for the king's evil," revived by James, and claimed by him as hereditary in his house. With less certainty we may push the limits of time a little closer. The incident of the thane of Cawdor has been compared with the famous conspiracy of the Earl of Gowry and his brother in 1601.[3] The bestowal of Cawdor's honors on Macbeth recalls the investiture of the dignities of Stone, formerly held by Gowry, upon Sir David Murray, who had been forward in saving the king's life from the conspirators. This event took place on April 7, 1605.[4] In 1605 also is recorded a curious performance given before James during a progress at Oxford. On reaching the gates of St. John's College he was met by three boys, representing the nymphs or Sibyls who had foretold the reign of Banquo's descendants. These delivered orations in Latin and English.[5] It is possible that this

[1] Forman's description of the play will be found in Appendix A.

[2] The Warner coincidence by itself proves nothing, for his narrative might have suggested the subject to Shakespeare.

[3] See J. H. Burton's *History of Scotland*, vol. vi. chap. 61.

[4] There is a difficulty in supposing that there is any allusion to the Gowry conspiracy in *Macbeth*. Another play on the subject, produced by the same company in 1604, got them into trouble. See Fleay, *Life and Work of Shakespeare*, p. 152. Was *Macbeth* an apology?

[5] This incident is described in Wake's *Rex Platonicus*, in Anthony Nixon's *The Oxford Triumph* (1605), and in MS. Baker 7044. The verses were written by Matthew Gwynne, and are annexed to his *Vertumnus* (1607)

performance suggested the writing of *Macbeth*, and that it was produced on the occasion of the visit of the King of Denmark to England in July, 1606. Oldys, the antiquary, has a story of a letter sent by James I to Shakespeare, and it has been conjectured that it was a command to write this play. On the whole, the production of *Macbeth* at the Globe may be provisionally put in 1606. This date is accepted by the majority of scholars, and it is consistent with the style and thought of the play. Malone further supports it by tracing in act ii. sc. 3 various allusions, to the trial of Garnet the Jesuit on March 28, to the low prices of that year, and to the French hose then fashionable.[1] It should be noted, however, that some critics have doubted the authenticity of this passage, and that such allusions can easily be introduced in the process of "writing up" a play.

Mr. Fleay, whose laborious and valuable investigations give him a claim to be heard, thinks that the play produced in 1606 was only a revision of an earlier work dating from 1601.[2] In that year the Lord Chamberlain's (afterwards the King's) Company was in disgrace at court, and travelled in the provinces. There is no reason to doubt the tradition that they went as far as Scotland;[3] and Mr. Fleay thinks that *Macbeth* was originally written for performance before King James at Aberdeen in the winter following the Gowry conspiracy. He supports his view by pointing out that the play as a whole is more closely related to *Julius Cæsar* and *Hamlet*, its companions in the First Folio, which belong to about 1601, than to *Lear* and *Othello*, which are later. He also suggests that the description of Cawdor's execution may have been inspired by the fate of the Earl of Essex. But Cawdor cannot well be both Gowry and Essex, and it is very doubtful if the players, whose disrepute at home was due to their connection with the Essex conspiracy, would be likely to make any allusion to that event.[4] The whole question of the extent to which personal and political allusions may be found in Shakespeare's plays would repay careful study.

[1] See notes on ii. 3. 5; ii. 3. 9; ii. 3. 15.

[2] See his *Life and Work of Shakespeare*, Section iv.

[3] The question is discussed at length in Knight's larger edition of Shakespeare; but the entries in the registers of the Town Council of Aberdeen for October 9 and 22, 1601, are decisive. These show that a company of players were at the Scotch court in that year, and that one of them was Laurence Fletcher, whom we know to have been a member of the Chamberlain's Company.

[4] A performance of *Richard II* was given by the Lord Chamberlain's Company on the night before the Essex rising was intended to take place, with the object of encouraging the conspirators. See my edition of *Richard II*, and Mr. Hales' *Notes and Essays on Shakespeare*.

There is a tendency to be hazardous with such speculations. I think that the critic who identifies Hamlet and Gertrude with James I and Mary Queen of Scots has been hazardous.

From the Restoration to the present day *Macbeth* has been universally popular upon the stage. Pepys saw it eight times between 1664 and 1668. But the *Macbeth* of the Restoration was hardly Shakespeare's play. The process of adaptation begun by Middleton was continued in accordance with the taste of the time; the musical element was still further extended; and the whole became rather an opera than a tragedy. Two moments in this change are marked by the printed versions of 1673 and 1674. The first of these follows, in most respects, the text of the Folios. Middleton's song, "Come away, Hecate," is inserted in full in act iii. sc. 5; and two other songs for the witches have been added at the end of act ii. scenes 2 and 3 respectively. It has been conjectured that these songs are by Sir William Davenant, Shakespeare's godson. In any case, Davenant is responsible for the edition of 1674. This contains the three songs already printed in 1673, together with that of "Black spirits and white," also by Middleton. But moreover, the whole text of the play has been mutilated and perverted; hardly a scene escaped; everywhere the rhythm and thought of the original has been obscured by bald additions and alterations of the adaptor's own.[1] It was for this travesty that Lock's beautiful music was composed, and in this that Betterton won such conspicuous success. It held the stage until 1744, when Garrick appeared in a version which was very nearly Shakespeare's. It was at this time that Mrs. Pritchard made a reputation as Lady Macbeth, which has only been overshadowed by that of Mrs. Siddons. It need hardly be said that every actor of distinction since Garrick's day has essayed the part of Macbeth.

2. SOURCE OF THE PLOT

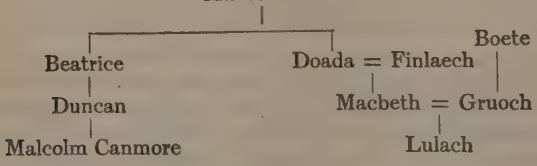
For the outlines of the story of *Macbeth* Shakespeare had recourse to a book from which he had already drawn the materials for his plays on English history. This was the great folio *Chronicle of England and Scotland*, by Raphael Holinshed and others, first printed in 1577, and afterwards, in the revised form which the poet used, in 1587. Shakespeare follows with some closeness the details of the reigns of Duncan and Macbeth as given in Holinshed's picturesque prose. The extent of his indebtedness may be gath-

[1] For a further note on these Restoration versions, see Appendix B.

ered from a study of the passages quoted in Appendix C. But he has interwoven with the continuous narratives incidents taken from other parts of the same chronicle. The chief of these is the account of the midnight murder of Duncan. This is evidently based on that given by Holinshed of the murder of Duncan's great-grandfather, King Duffe, by Donwald, the governor of his castle, and his wife. Shakespeare has also worked in some of the striking features of traditionary witch lore. Much of this, in a time of plentiful witch trials, was no doubt matter of common knowledge; but the poet may possibly have consulted Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), or King James the First's curious little tract on *Demonologie* (1597).[1]

To come back to Holinshed — the chronicle of Macbeth there given is derived from the Latin *Scotorum Historiæ* of Hector Boyis, Boethius, or Boece (1527). This was translated into Scotch by John Bellenden, archdeacon of Moray (1536), and Holinshed may have used the translation as well as the original.[2] Boethius in his turn had borrowed from Fordun, a chantry priest of Aberdeen, who wrote a *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* in the 14th century.[3] It need hardly be said that the narrative common to all these chroniclers is legend rather than history. The labors of recent scholars have enabled us to reconstruct, shadowily enough, the historical Macbeth.[4]

In 1031 Malcom II of Scotland did homage to Cnut, King of England. He was accompanied on that occasion by two chieftains, under-kings, or maormors. One of these was Maelbaeþa, Mealbeaðe, or Macbeoðe, maormor of Moray. It is thus that Macbeth first comes before us. He was the grandson of King Malcolm by his daughter Doada, who married Finlaech. His own wife was Gruoch, daughter of Boete.



[1] See Appendix D.

[2] See i. 3. 84, *note*.

[3] Fordun's book forms the first part of the *Scoti-chronicon* (ed. Skene, 1871).

[4] The following sketch is based upon the discussions contained in Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, and Robertson's *Early Kings of Scotland*.

In 1032 Malcolm murdered the head of Gruoch's house, probably Boete himself, the motive being that Malcolm had only daughters, and Boete had a distant claim to the throne. In 1034 Malcolm died, and was succeeded by his grandson Duncan, cousin of Macbeth. Duncan at once named his son Malcolm Canmore to be his heir and Prince of Cumberland. Macbeth and Gruoch had therefore no good will toward the reigning branch of the family. Duncan was an ineffective king; he invaded England unsuccessfully, and then entered upon a war with Thorfinn, the Norwegian Jarl of Orkney. Macbeth, who was commander of the army, took the opportunity to make common cause with Thorfinn, had Duncan murdered at Bothgouanan, "the Smith's bothie," and in his own right or his wife's assumed the crown. His reign was one of order and prosperity; his bounty to the church became famous in Scotland, and even at Rome; the homage paid by Malcolm to England does not seem to have been renewed in his lifetime. But he had a formidable enemy and neighbor in Siward, Earl of Northumbria. In 1054, Siward, with the consent of Edward the Confessor and the Witenagemòt, invaded Scotland by land and sea. A great battle took place on July 27, in which Macbeth was defeated and Siward's son Osborn and his nephew Siward were slain. Malcolm Canmore was proclaimed King, but Macbeth kept up the war in the north for four years, until he fell at Lumfanan in Aberdeenshire, in 1058. The resistance of his son or stepson, Lulach, was soon crushed. A slightly different version of some of the facts is given in Wyntown's *Cronykill* (bk. vi. ch. 18). Here it is stated that Gruoch was the wife of the murdered Duncan, that Macbeth was his nephew, and that Malcolm Canmore was illegitimate. Some scholars have thought that Shakespeare had Wyntown before him, as well as Holinshed.[1]

Such is the actual substratum upon which the accretions of time and the genius of a poet have fashioned an eternal tragedy. In several important respects — Macbeth's relations to the Norwegians, the character of his reign, the rapidity of his downfall — the story diverges widely from the reality. The supernatural element is a characteristically mediæval addition, and it contains two bits of widespread folklore in the incidents of the birth of Macduff and of the moving forest.[2] Macduff himself, Banquo, Fleance, and their legendary connection with the Stuarts, have no sure place in history.

[1] An extract from Wyntown's *Cronykill of Scotland* was printed in Simrock's *Remarks on the Plots of Shakespeare's Plays* (Sh. Soc. 1850).

[2] See Simrock's *Remarks*.

It is possible that Shakespeare was not the first to make a literary use of the story of Macbeth. Allusion has already been made to the interlude on the subject, played before James in 1605. Collier quotes two references which seem to point to a still earlier version. One is from Kempe's *Nine daies Wonder* (1600).[1] It runs as follows: "I met a proper upright youth, only for a little stooping in the shoulders, all heart to the heel, a penny poet, whose first making was the miserable stolen story of Mac-doel, or Macdobeth, or Macsomewhat, for I am sure a Mac it was, though I never had the maw to see it." The other is an entry in the Register of the Stationers' Company: "27 die Augusti 1596. Tho. Millington — Thomas Millington is likewise fined at ijs vjd for printing of a ballad contrary to order, which he also presently paid. Md. the ballad entitled The taming of a Shrew. Also one other ballad of Macdobeth."[2] I do not think we have the materials to say whether the "ballad" here mentioned was really a stage play or a ballad in the strict sense.

3. CRITICAL APPRECIATION

It would appear that about 1601 Shakespeare lost his faith in the world. The light-heartedness of his earlier plays vanished; the laughter died away upon his lips, and the note of criticism, first struck, hesitatingly and, as it were, against his will, in Jaques, became dominant, swelling at last to the titanic denunciations of Lear and Timon. Attempts have been made to connect this phase in the poet's mental history with personal losses in the death of those dear to him, and, perhaps more justifiably, with the spiritual discouragement darkly shadowed forth in the Sonnets. However this may be, the clear fact is that for eight or nine years he devoted himself to the analysis of triumphant evil, setting forth in strong relief the failures, the disillusions, the ineffectiveness of humanity. Temperament at war with destiny, the brute in man trampling upon the god — these are the themes he is compelled to illustrate. To this period, so far as we can fix their dates, belong all the great tragedies with the exception of *Romeo and Juliet*; and here too come the three "bitter comedies," in some respects more sad than the tragedies themselves. The pessimistic attitude toward life was not indeed final with Shakespeare. For a while he was "in the depths" — to borrow Mr. Dowden's happy phrase;

[1] Ed. Dyce, Camden Soc. 1840.

[2] See Collier's 2d ed. of Shakespeare (1858).

but he rose to walk the heights; his last words proclaim the ultimate victory of good in the serene philosophy of *The Tempest*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Winter's Tale*. But while it endured, as Swinburne has pointed out in the case of *Othello*, his pessimism was deeper, more unchequered even than that of Æschylus; there is no purification of Apollo shining in the distance. Nor can any better example of this mood be taken than *Macbeth;* the simplicity and grandeur of the presentment reveal clearly the deep underlying thought. It is a drama of man at odds with fate, driven from sin to sin and its retribution by external invincible forces. It will be the object of this Appreciation to show how the central idea thus stated moulds and informs the whole play.

A drama, like every other work of art, if it is to affect the spectator at all, must do so by means of some unity, some singleness of impression left upon him. It must be a whole, and be felt as such — not a mere bundle of disconnected parts, however beautiful in themselves. Aristotle, analysing the masterpieces of Sophocles, laid down that a drama should concern itself with the development of a single action, in its beginning, middle, and end. The Unity of Action, so formulated, has been held at various times as a canon of literary orthodoxy, sharply dividing classicist from romantic schools of dramatic writing. With it have universally gone two other canons — the so-called Unities of Place and Time; the one demanding an unchanged scene, the other an action continuous and complete in a period roughly equivalent to that of representation; at most, in a single day. The Unity of Action goes, no doubt, nearly to the root of the dramatic problem; the Unities of Place and Time are less vital. They have their origin in the special limitations of the Greek stage, made rigid by the conservative element in the Greek drama, which never forgot to be a worship of Dionysus. The practice of Seneca, so influential among the scholar-poets of the Renaissance, introduced the Unities to the modern world, and it was not until after a severe struggle that they failed to impose their bonds upon the Elizabethan theatre. The best landmark of this struggle is Sidney's *Apologie for Poetrie*,[1] written about 1583, in which he supported the claims of the drama based on classical models against the looser romantic type, which popular poets and actor-playwrights were rapidly introducing. But Marlowe and Shakespeare were on the side of romanticism, and the three Unities vanished with the Chorus and the

[1] The *Apologie for Poetrie* was first published in 1595. The most accessible edition is that by Arber, in his series of *English Reprints* (1868).

Messenger and the other paraphernalia of strict Senecan doctrine. With the discarding of formalism arose the danger that the true limits of stage effectiveness might be forgotten. The Unities of Time and Place were little loss, but unless Unity of Action or something equivalent were retained the result would be chaos rather than drama. There are too many Elizabethan plays, in fact, which have very little dramatic unity. They are mere stories, romances, acted instead of read. But the conditions of unity in a story and in a play are not the same. A story permits of pauses, of turnings back, of the application of thought to win its secret. But in a play you are hurried on, the imagination moves rapidly from event to event, the links of unity must be transparent and obvious. It is the characteristic defect of the Elizabethan dramatist to neglect this distinction; immeasurably superior in all merely literary graces to the Sardous and the Ibsens of our day, in stagecraft, in the knowledge of stage effectiveness, he is as a child among them. Even Shakespeare is not exempt from this criticism. A modern manager producing *King Lear* must omit most of the Edgar story, and the little that is left only weakens the total impression of the play. A patient analysis may find a unity by discovering that the same ethical idea is illustrated in the house of Gloucester and in the house of Lear; but in the theatre, where the unity must present itself, not be sought, such a process would scarcely be possible. I do not for a moment mean that Shakespeare was blind to the problem of unity. A comparison of two successive plays — deliberate pendants, one may well think — would at once dispel such an idea. In *The Winter's Tale* all the three Unities are deliberately and wildly outraged; in *The Tempest* they are most scrupulously observed. It is a confession of literary faith: the poet declares at once his power to handle and his will to disregard the formalities of classicism.

The objections that may be urged against *King Lear* do not apply to *Macbeth*. Here more than elsewhere Shakespeare has escaped the pitfalls of romanticism; here, not by direct imitation, but by the sympathy of genius, he has approached most nearly to the simplicity, the large sweep, of Æschylus. Analysis of the play will show that a unity of impression is produced in it in no less than four ways.

In the first place, there is unity of action in the strictest sense. The whole interest is concentrated in the rise and fall of Macbeth and his wife. The episodes are few and slight, and can everywhere be shown to be necessary, by way of relief or contrast, to the

emotions appealed to by the central story. Except in the tragedies, this particular kind of unity is rare with Shakespeare. Some of the comedies present as many as four or five stories, distinct threads of interest, woven together with consummate skill. Doubtless the poet felt that the intenser, more passionate feeling aroused in tragedy would not bear such rivalry. They cannot be laid down and taken up again with the change of scene.

Second, there is unity of philosophic idea. This is to be found in nearly every play; each is the medium of some great thought, some utterance of the poet's mind on deep questions, on love or kingship or character, or on the ultimate nature of the government of the world. And in the light of this, every character, every fragment of the plot must be read in order to grasp its full meaning. In *Macbeth* the central idea or theme appears to me to be this: A noble character, noble alike in potentiality and fruition, may yet be completely overmastered by mysterious, inexplicable temptation; and if he be once subdued, a curse is forever upon him. Temptation begets sin, and sin yet further sin, and this again punishment sure and inexorable. The illustration of this central idea is to be found in the rise and fall of Lord and Lady Macbeth. To them temptation comes in the guise of ambition, the subtlest form in which it can approach high souls. Of the supernatural setting in which it is exhibited there will be more to say hereafter; for the present, note that as soon as the murder of Duncan is committed there is never any hope of regress — sin leads to sin with remorseless fatality, until the end is utter ruin of the moral sense or even of reason itself; so that death comes almost as a relief, though it be a miserable death, without hope of repentance. Such a story is a proper theme for tragedy, because it depicts strong human natures battling with destiny and overcome; had they been weak natures the disproportion between the forces would have been too great, and we should have pathos and not tragedy. Starting from this central idea, the power of Shakespeare's treatment of it is most clearly manifest in the contrasted results of similar circumstances on two characters of different mould and fibre — one that of a man, the other of a woman; one realizing itself in action, the other in thought. When first Macbeth comes before us, it is as a mighty warrior — he is spoken of as "valour's minion," "Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof;" by performing prodigies of personal valor he has saved the country in one day from a civil and an alien foe. This is the noble side of him; away from the battlefield his greatness is gone, he sinks to the level of quite common men. Lady

Macbeth herself expresses this in a passage which has been misunderstood:

> Yet do I fear thy nature;
> It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
> To catch the nearest way.

"The milk of human kindness" — that is clearly not "a tender nature," of which Macbeth never shows a trace, but rather "the commonplace ordinary qualities and tendencies of humankind."[1] As for Lady Macbeth, it is not easy to accept the traditional stage view of her as a sheer human monster and the evil genius of her husband's soul. Hers is both a subtler and a nobler nature than his. Living a woman's solitary life, she has turned her thoughts inward; she, too, is a conqueror and has won her triumphs, not in war, but in the training of her intellect and the subjugation of her will. And withal, she is a very woman still:

> I have given suck, and know
> How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me;

and

> Had he not resembled
> My father as he slept, I had done 't;

and that despairing cry of horror, "Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him." Macbeth addresses her in language of love, and she too is wrapped up in him. Her immediate impulse to crime is ambition for her husband rather than for herself, and in the banquet scene she stifles agonies of remorse to save him from blunders.

Thus the antithesis between the two is that between the practical life and the intellectual, and the effects of this difference are everywhere apparent. Macbeth is bold and resolute in the moment of action; he can kill a king, and he has a curious gift of ready speech throughout, which avails him to answer unwelcome questions. But when there is nothing actually to be done he is devoid of self-control; he cannot wait or stand still; he becomes a prey to countless terrible imaginings; he is wildly superstitious. In all this Lady Macbeth is the exact converse; she has banished all superstition from her soul; she is strong enough of will to quell her husband's cowardly fears; she can scheme and plot, but she cannot act; she must leave the actual doing of the deed to Macbeth; at the moment of discovery she faints.

[1] Cf. note ad loc., and Moulton's *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist*.

The emotional effects of their crime are totally different on the pair. In Macbeth the effect is purely fear; there is no word of sorrow or sense of sin, only a base dread lest he should be found out and lose what he played for; if the fatal blow

> Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
> But here upon this bank and shoal of time,

he is willing to "jump the life to come." In time this fear assumes terrible proportions; it drives him to new murders; he slaughters Banquo, he slaughters the family of Macduff; finally he becomes a craven and bloody tyrant; even his old love for his wife is swallowed up in selfishness; when her death is told him he cannot stay to mourn: "She should have died hereafter." Only in the last hour of battle does he for one moment recover something of his old brave spirit. With Lady Macbeth the curse works itself out, not in fear but in remorse; it impels her husband to fresh deeds of blood; she has no hand in any murder but the first. But her sin is ever present to her: awake or dreaming she can think of nothing but that awful night, and the stain upon her hand and soul. At last her overtasked brain breaks down; we witness her mental agony in the sleep-walking scene: "Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh! oh! oh!" And then she dies, a voluntary and most wretched death.

The other personages of the play are completely subordinate to the two central figures. Either they are mechanical, necessary to the incidents and episodes by which the plot moves on, as Ross and Siward; or else they serve to intensify by character-contrast our conception of Macbeth's nature. It is noticeable that Lady Macbeth in this respect, as in others, is entirely isolated. But Macbeth sins both as subject and as lord; in the one relation Banquo and Macduff, in the other Duncan and Malcolm are set over against him. These are loyal, he is treacherous; these are king-like, he is a tyrant.

The witches, of course, come under another category. I take it that, wherever Shakespeare introduces the supernatural, he does so with a definite purpose; it is symbolical, pointing the fact that here, just here, we come upon one of those ultimate mysteries which meet us everywhere when we scratch the surface of things. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, this is the meaning of the fairies; love is a mystery — it is indeed but the highest form of that primal mystery of attraction that pervades all matter and all spirit, and binds man to his God. In *The Tempest*, the magic of Prospero

typifies the mystery of an overruling providence; and here Shakespeare has become his own commentator, for while this theme occupies the main plot, the under-plot of Miranda and Ferdinand contains the mystery of love; that of Caliban and the drunken sailors the mystery of intoxication. In *Macbeth*, the supernatural character of the weird sisters denotes the mystery involved in temptation; the mystery, that is, of the existence of evil. They do not tempt Macbeth; he was fallen before he met them; that is brought out clearly enough;[1] they are only personifications of the real internal tempting motives. And, since in the mystery of evil is included the punishment of sin, as well as its origin, so the sisters appear to Macbeth a second time, to ensure his destruction by their deceitful promises.

We come now to a third kind of unity, of which again Shakespeare makes frequent use, — which consists in something so subtle and impalpable that it often defies analysis, and needs to be felt rather than demonstrated. Every reader must be aware that there belongs to each play an indefinable something, a note, a fragrance, a temperament, that distinguishes it from any and every other. We might call this unity of soul, and the last unity of mind, borrowing a hint from Mr. Pater, who speaks of "unity of atmosphere here, as there of design — soul securing color (or perfume, might we say?) as mind secures form, the latter being essentially finite, the former vague and infinite, as the influence of a living person is practically infinite." So in *Macbeth* a thousand delicate touches serve to produce a sense of weird horror, rising to its highest point in the terrors of that unspeakable midnight murder.

Consider first how the keynote of the whole play is given by the appearance of the weird sisters amid thunder and lightning in the first scene; then mark the awful chill that settles on us as we pass with the doomed Duncan to the gate of that castle where Lady Macbeth waits to welcome him.

> This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
> Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
> Unto our gentle senses.

The irony of this only increases our forebodings, and the "guest of summer, the temple-haunting martlet" that nests upon the wall, gives an added touch of tragedy. Then night falls, a night fit for

[1] i. 7. 48–51 must refer to some period before the opening of the play; and iii. 1. 75 also gives a hint of Macbeth's past life.

the deed to be done. It is pitch dark. "There 's husbandry in heaven; their candles are all out," says Banquo. Evil things are abroad.

> The night has been unruly: where we lay
> Our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say,
> Lamentings heard i' the air, strange screams of death,
> And prophesying with accents terrible
> Of dire combustion and confused events
> New hatch'd to the woeful time: the obscure bird
> Clamour'd the livelong night; some say, the earth
> Was feverous and did shake.

Even as the guilty pair set about the preparations for their sin, the vaulted hall is lit by lightning and reëchoes with thunder; with them we "hear the owl shriek and the cricket cry." Innocent men are visited by strange thoughts and dreams.

> There 's one did laugh in 's sleep and one cried "Murder!"
> That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them:
> But they did say their prayers, and address'd them
> Again to sleep.

Even such a nobly-strung soul as Banquo's is smitten with a strange sense of moral weakness and shrinking from the battle with temptation.

> A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
> And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers,
> Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
> Gives way to in repose!

The most awful touch of all is that knocking of some unknown comer at the gate, which calls our minds, strained by the intensity of the situation almost into sympathy with the crime, back to the frightful realities of fact; and this effect is grimly enhanced by the drunken porter, whose fumbling for his keys and swearing at the disturbers of his rest delays for some moments more the imminent discovery. By such delicate workmanship of detail the poet contrives to produce an impression of weirdness, of something uncanny, which signalizes the play as a whole, and it is in this very effect that the so-called aesthetic unity consists. One might well trace the sources of this impression through the banqueting and sleep-walking scenes, but it is more worth while to point out how the general effect is intensified by comparison with the one scene in England, with its idyllic picture of the good King Edward the Confessor curing his subjects of their diseases. Shakespeare uses

freely what Ruskin regards as the device of a second-rate poet, the "pathetic fallacy"—that is, he attributes to the inanimate things of nature a sympathy with the moods and passions of men. It is hard to understand Ruskin's objection; the "pathetic fallacy" is but a weaker modern form of the view of nature on which most of Greek religion was based, and it is surely both a proper and a universal conception for poetry. Coleridge has given the *rationale* of it in these lines:

> Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,
> Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
> Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
> Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
> Making it a companionable form,
> Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit
> By its own moods interprets, everywhere
> Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
> And makes a toy of Thought.[1]

Fourth, and finally, there is in *Macbeth* a special and peculiar unity of structure. The play moves forward with an absolute regularity; it is almost architectural in its rise and fall, in the balance of its parts. The plot is complex; it has an ebb and flow, a complication and a resolution, to use technical terms. That is to say, the fortunes of Macbeth swoop up to a crisis or turning-point; and thence down again to a catastrophe. The catastrophe of course closes the play; the crisis, as so often with Shakespeare, comes in its exact centre, in the middle of the middle act, with the escape of Fleance. Hitherto, Macbeth's path has been gilded with success; now the epoch of failure begins. And the parallelisms and correspondences throughout are remarkable. Each act has a definite subject: the Temptation: the First, Second, and Third Crimes; the Retribution. Three accidents, if we may so call them, help Macbeth in the first half of the play: the visit of Duncan to Inverness, his own impulsive murder of the grooms, the flight of Malcolm and Donalbain. And in the second half, three accidents help to bring about his ruin: the escape of Fleance, the false prophecy of the witches, the escape of Macduff. Malcolm and Macduff at the end answer to Duncan and Banquo at the beginning. A meeting with the witches heralds both rise and fall. Finally, each of the Crimes is represented in the Retribution. Malcolm, the son of Duncan, and Macduff, whose wife and child he slew, conquer Macbeth; Fleance begets a race that shall reign in his stead.

[1] *Frost at Midnight* in *Sibylline Leaves*.

A few words are necessary on the style, the technique of the play. As has been said, we have probably only a mutilated stage version before us; and this must account for the ruggedness, the broken lines here and there. The manner of writing is the manner of almost all Shakespeare's great tragedies. The perfect proportion between the thing said and the words it is said in, which is so noticeable in the middle comedies, has disappeared; the thought has become too full, too intense for the expression. Hence we have these closely-packed, pregnant lines into which the poet seems often to have put more than language will endure, so that the exact meaning is often elusive, incapable of analysis. Yet this enigmatic speech, with its undersenses and its ironies, is after all appropriate to the half-lights, the elemental problems of the theme that it sets forth. To come to technicalities, the rhythm and metre of *Macbeth* is that of Shakespeare's later work, though not the latest.[1] The number of feminine endings and the proportion of overflow to end-stopped lines sufficiently show this. There is a small number of light endings. Prose is used to produce special effects in the sleep-walking scene and in two other scenes. There is a larger proportion of rhyme than we might expect in a play of so late a date, but this fact may be easily explained. The witches, as supernatural beings, speak appropriately in a rhyming metre. The other rhyming lines are mostly couplets coming at the ends of scenes or speeches. There is good reason to believe that, in a stage version, these may be due to the natural desire of the actor for an effective "curtain."

[1] See Appendix H.

THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DUNCAN . . . . . King of Scotland

MALCOLM, DONALBAIN . . . . . His sons

MACBETH, BANQUO . . . . . Generals of the King's Army

MACDUFF, LENNOX, ROSS, MENTEITH, ANGUS, CAITHNESS . . . . . Noblemen of Scotland

FLEANCE . . . . . Son to Banquo

SIWARD, Earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces

Young SIWARD . . . . . His son

SEYTON . . . . . An officer attending on Macbeth

Boy . . . . . Son to Macduff

An English Doctor

A Scotch Doctor

A Soldier

A Porter

An Old Man

LADY MACBETH

LADY MACDUFF

Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth

HECATE

Three Witches

Apparitions

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants, and Messengers.

SCENE — SCOTLAND: ENGLAND

MACBETH

ACT I

Scene I — *A desert place*

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches

First Witch. When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
Sec. Witch. When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.
Third Witch. That will be ere the set of sun.
First Witch. Where the place?
Sec. Witch. Upon the heath.
Third Witch. There to meet with Macbeth.
First Witch. I come, Graymalkin!
Sec. Witch. Paddock calls.
Third Witch. Anon.
All. Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *A camp near Forres*

Alarum within. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, *with* Attendants, *meeting a bleeding* Sergeant

Dun. What bloody man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.
Mal. This is the sergeant
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought

'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
As thou didst leave it.
Ser. Doubtful it stood;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald —
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him — from the western isles
Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied;
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore: but all's too weak:
For brave Macbeth — well he deserves that name —
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.
Dun. O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!
Ser. As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come
Discomfort swells. Mark, king of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had with valour arm'd
Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels,
But the Norweyan lord surveying vantage,
With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men
Began a fresh assault.
Dun. Dismay'd not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

Ser. Yes;
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks, so they
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorize another Golgotha,
I cannot tell.
But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.
Dun. So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
They smack of honour both. Go get him surgeons.
[*Exit Sergeant, attended.*
Who comes here?

Enter Ross *and* Angus

Mal. The worthy thane of Ross.
Len. What a haste looks through his eyes! So should he look
That seems to speak things strange.
Ross. God save the king!
Dun. Whence camest thou, worthy thane?
Ross. From Fife, great king;
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky
And fan our people cold. Norway himself,
With terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor
The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit: and, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.

Dun. Great happiness!
Ross. That now
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition;
Nor would we deign him burial of his men
Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's inch
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.
Dun. No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest: go pronounce his present death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.
Ross. I'll see it done.
Dun. What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III — *A heath near Forres*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches

First Witch. Where hast thou been, sister?
Sec. Witch. Killing swine.
Third Witch. Sister, where thou?
First Witch. A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd: —
"Give me," quoth I:
"Aroint thee, witch!" the rump-fed ronyon cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger:
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And, like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.
Sec. Witch. I'll give thee a wind.
First Witch. Thou'rt kind.
Third Witch. And I another.

First Witch. I myself have all the other,
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card.
I will drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;
He shall live a man forbid:
Weary se'ennights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine:
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.
Look what I have.

Sec. Witch. Show me, show me.

First Witch. Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come. [*Drum within.*

Third Witch. A drum, a drum!
Macbeth doth come.

All. The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine and thrice to mine
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace! the charm's wound up.

Enter MACBETH *and* BANQUO

Macb. So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Ban. How far is't call'd to Forres? What are these
So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught

That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

Macb. Speak, if you can: what are you?

First Witch. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

Sec. Witch. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

Third Witch. All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!

Ban. Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favours nor your hate.

First Witch. Hail!

Sec. Witch. Hail!

Third Witch. Hail!

First Witch. Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

Sec. Witch. Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch. Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:

So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

First Witch. Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

Macb. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:

By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
You owe this strange intelligence? or why
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you. [*Witches vanish.*

Ban. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd?

Macb. Into the air; and what seem'd corporal melted
As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd!

Ban. Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner?

Macb. Your children shall be kings.

Ban. You shall be king.

Macb. And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

Ban. To the selfsame tune and words. Who's here?

Enter Ross *and* Angus

Ross. The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success; and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,

His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his: silenced with that,
In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
Strange images of death. As thick as hail
Came post with post; and every one did bear
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
And pour'd them down before him.

Ang. We are sent
To give thee from our royal master thanks;
Only to herald thee into his sight,
Not pay thee.

Ross. And, for an earnest of a greater honour,
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor:
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.

Ban. What, can the devil speak true?

Macb. The thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me
In borrow'd robes?

Ang. Who was the thane lives yet;
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not;
But treasons capital, confess'd and proved,
Have overthrown him.

Macb. [*Aside*] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!
The greatest is behind.

[*To Ross and Angus*] Thanks for your pains.
[*To Ban.*] Do you not hope your children shall be
kings,
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me
Promised no less to them?
Ban. That trusted home
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 't is strange:
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence.
Cousins, a word, I pray you.
Macb. [*Aside*] Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme. — I thank you gentlemen.
[*Aside*] This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill, cannot be good: if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings:
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man that function
Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is
But what is not.
Ban. Look, how our partner's rapt.
Macb. [*Aside*] If chance will have me king, why
chance may crown me,

Without my stir.

Ban. New honours come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
But with the aid of use.

Macb. [*Aside*] Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

Ban. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

Macb. Give me your favour: my dull brain was wrought
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are register'd where every day I turn
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king.
Think upon what hath chanced, and, at more time,
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.

Ban. Very gladly.

Macb. Till then, enough. Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *Forres. The palace*

Flourish. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, *and* Attendants

Dun. Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission yet return'd?

Mal. My liege,
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke
With one that saw him die: who did report
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,
Implored your highness' pardon and set forth
A deep repentance: nothing in his life

Became him like the leaving it; he died
As one that had been studied in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he owed,
As 't were a careless trifle.
Dun. There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

Enter Macbeth, Banquo, Ross, *and* Angus

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me: thou art so far before
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine! only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.
Macb. The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties; and our duties
Are to your throne and state, children and servants,
Which do but what they should, by doing every thing
Safe toward your love and honour.
Dun. Welcome hither:
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour
To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known
No less to have done so, let me infold thee
And hold thee to my heart.

Ban. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.
Dun. My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know
We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter
The Prince of Cumberland; which honour must
Not unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,
And bind us further to you.
Macb. The rest is labour, which is not used for you:
I'll be myself the harbinger and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach;
So humbly take my leave.
Dun. My worthy Cawdor!
Macb. [*Aside*] The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
Let not light see my black and deep desires:
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [*Exit.*
Dun. True, worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant,
And in his commendations I am fed;
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome:
It is a peerless kinsman. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

Scene V — *Inverness. Macbeth's castle*

Enter Lady Macbeth, *reading a letter*

Lady M. "They met me in the day of success: and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me 'Thane of Cawdor'; by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with 'Hail, king that shalt be!' This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,
That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win: thou'ldst have, great Glamis,
That which cries "Thus thou must do, if thou have it;
And that which rather thou dost fear to do
Than wishest should be undone." Hie thee hither,

That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crown'd withal.

Enter a Messenger

What is your tidings?

Mess. The king comes here to-night.

Lady M. Thou'rt mad to say it:
Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,
Would have inform'd for preparation.

Mess. So please you, it is true: our thane is coming:
One of my fellows had the speed of him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.

Lady M. Give him tending;
He brings great news. [*Exit Messenger.*
The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances

You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry "Hold, hold!"

Enter Macbeth

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.
Macb. My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.
Lady M. And when goes hence?
Macb. To-morrow, as he purposes.
Lady M. O, never
Shall sun that morrow see!
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under't. He that's coming
Must be provided for: and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.
Macb. We will speak further.
Lady M. Only look up clear;
To alter favour ever is to fear:
Leave all the rest to me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI — *Before Macbeth's castle*

Hautboys and torches. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Banquo, Lennox, Macduff, Ross, Angus, *and* Attendants

Dun. This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.
Ban. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed,
The air is delicate.

Enter Lady Macbeth

Dun. See, see, our honour'd hostess! 10
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.
Lady M. All our service
In every point twice done and then done double
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits.
Dun. Where's the thane of Cawdor? 20
We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his purveyor: but he rides well;

And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.
Lady M. Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves and what is theirs, in compt,
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.
Dun. Give me your hand;
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him.
By your leave, hostess. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII — *Macbeth's castle*

Hautboys and torches. Enter a Sewer, *and divers* Servants *with dishes and service, and pass over the stage. Then enter* Macbeth

Macb. If it were done when 't is done, then
't were well
It were done quickly: if the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'ld jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgement here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust;
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,

Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other.

Enter Lady Macbeth

How now! what news?

Lady M. He has almost supp'd: why have you left the chamber?

Macb. Hath he ask'd for me?

Lady M. Know you not he has?

Macb. We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

Lady M. Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard

To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"
Like the poor cat i' the adage?
Macb. Prithee, peace:
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.
Lady M. What beast was't, then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.
Macb. If we should fail?
Lady M. We fail!
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep —
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him — his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason

A limbeck only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?
Macb. Bring forth men-children only;
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
That they have done't?
Lady M. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?
Macb. I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Scene I — *Court of Macbeth's castle*

Enter Banquo, *and* Fleance *bearing a torch before him*

Ban. How goes the night, boy?
Fle. The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.
Ban. And she goes down at twelve.
Fle. I take't, 't is later, sir.

Ban. Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!

Enter MACBETH, *and a* Servant *with a torch*

Give me my sword.
Who's there?
Macb. A friend.
Ban. What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your offices.
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up
In measureless content.
Macb. Being unprepared,
Our will became the servant to defect;
Which else should free have wrought.
Ban. All's well.
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have show'd some truth.
Macb. I think not of them:
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.
Ban. At your kind'st leisure.

Macb. If you shall cleave to my consent, when 't is,
It shall make honour for you.
Ban. So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsell'd.
Macb. Good repose the while!
Ban. Thanks, sir: the like to you! 30
[*Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.*
Macb. Go bid my mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.
[*Exit Servant.*
Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable 40
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before. There's no such thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world

Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtained sleep; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.
[*A bell rings.*
I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell. [*Exit.*

Scene II — *The same*

Enter Lady Macbeth

Lady M. That which hath made them drunk
hath made me bold;
What hath quench'd them hath given me fire.
Hark! Peace!
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it:
The doors are open; and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores: I have drugg'd
their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

Enter Macbeth *above, for a moment*

Macb. Who's there? what, ho!

Lady M. Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,
And 't is not done. The attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.

Enter Macbeth

My husband!

Macb. I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

Lady M. I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

Macb. Did you not speak?

Lady M. When? Now?

Macb. As I descended.

Lady M. I!

Macb. Hark!
Who lies i' the second chamber?

Lady M. Donalbain.

Macb. This is a sorry sight.

[*Looking on his hands.*

Lady M. A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

Macb. There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one cried "Murder!"
That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them:
But they did say their prayers, and address'd them
Again to sleep.

Lady M. There are two lodged together.

Macb. One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen" the other;
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
Listening their fear, I could not say "Amen,"
When they did say "God bless us!"
Lady M. Consider it not so deeply.
Macb. But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?
I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"
Stuck in my throat.
Lady M. These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.
Macb. Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep," the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleave of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast, —
Lady M. What do you mean?
Macb. Still it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the house:
"Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more."
Lady M. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: go carry them; and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

Macb. I'll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.
Lady M. Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures: 't is the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal;
For it must seem their guilt.
[*Exit. Knocking within.*
Macb. Whence is that knocking?
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

Re-enter Lady Macbeth

Lady M. My hands are of your colour; but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I hear a knocking
At the south entry: retire we to our chamber:
A little water clears us of this deed:
How easy is it, then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within.*] Hark! more knocking.
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

Macb. To know my deed, 't were best not know myself. [*Knocking within.*
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III — *The same*

Knocking within. Enter a Porter

Porter. Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning the key. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer, that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty: come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you'll sweat for 't. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking within.*] Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter.

[*Opens the gate.*

Enter Macduff *and* Lennox

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?
Port. 'Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock.
Macd. Is thy master stirring?

Enter Macbeth

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.
Len. Good morrow, noble sir.
Macb. Good morrow, both.
Macd. Is the king stirring, worthy thane?
Macb. Not yet.
Macd. He did command me to call timely on him:
I have almost slipp'd the hour.
Macb. I'll bring you to him.
Macd. I know this is a joyful trouble to you;
But yet 't is one.
Macb. The labour we delight in physics pain.
This is the door.
Macd. I'll make so bold to call,
For 't is my limited service. [*Exit.*
Len. Goes the king hence to-day?
Macb. He does: he did appoint so.
Len. The night has been unruly: where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatch'd to the woeful time: the obscure bird

Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth
Was feverous and did shake.
Macb. 'T was a rough night.
Len. My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

Re-enter MACDUFF

Macd. O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!
Macb. *Len.* What's the matter?
Macd. Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building!
Macb. What is't you say? the life?
Len. Mean you his majesty?
Macd. Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon: do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.*

Awake, awake!
Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason!
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself! up, up, and see
The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror! Ring the bell.

[*Bell rings.*

Enter Lady Macbeth

Lady M. What's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!
Macd. O gentle lady,
'T is not for you to hear what I can speak:
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell.

Enter Banquo

O Banquo, Banquo,
Our royal master's murder'd!
Lady M. Woe, alas!
What, in our house?
Ban. Too cruel any where.
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
And say it is not so.

Re-enter Macbeth *and* Lennox, *with* Ross

Macb. Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had lived a blessed time; for, from this instant,
There's nothing serious in mortality:
All is but toys: renown and grace is dead;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter Malcolm *and* Donalbain

Don. What is amiss?
Macb. You are, and do not know't:
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.
Macd. Your royal father's murder'd.

Mal. O, by whom?
Len. Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't;
Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found
Upon their pillows:
They stared, and were distracted; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.
Macb. O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.
Macd. Wherefore did you so?
Macb. Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood;
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd with gore: who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make 's love known?
Lady M. Help me hence, ho!
Macd. Look to the lady.
Mal. [*Aside to Don.*] Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours?
Don. [*Aside to Mal.*] What should be spoken here, where our fate,
Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us?
Let's away;
Our tears are not yet brew'd.

Mal. [*Aside to Don.*] Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.

Ban. Look to the lady:
[*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*
And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:
In the great hand of God I stand; and thence
Against the undivulged pretence I fight
Of treasonous malice.

Macd. And so do I.

All. So all.

Macb. Let's briefly put on manly readiness,
And meet i' the hall together.

All. Well contented,

[*Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.*

Mal. What will you do? Let's not consort with them:
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

Don. To Ireland, I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.

Mal. This murderous shaft that's shot
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away: there's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *Outside Macbeth's castle*

Enter Ross *and an* old Man

Old M. Threescore and ten I can remember well:
Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings.
Ross. Ah, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threaten his bloody stage: by the clock, 't is day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp:
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it?
Old M. 'T is unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.
Ross. And Duncan's horses — a thing most strange and certain —
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.
Old M. 'T is said they eat each other.
Ross. They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes
That look'd upon 't. Here comes the good Macduff.

Enter Macduff

How goes the world, sir, now?
Macd. Why, see you not?

Ross. Is't known who did this more than bloody deed?

Macd. Those that Macbeth hath slain.

Ross. Alas, the day!
What good could they pretend?

Macd. They were suborn'd:
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled; which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.

Ross. 'Gainst nature still!
Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up
Thine own life's means! Then 't is most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

Macd. He is already named, and gone to Scone
To be invested.

Ross. Where is Duncan's body?

Macd. Carried to Colmekill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

Ross. Will you to Scone?

Macd. No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

Ross. Well, I will thither.

Macd. Well, may you see things well done there: adieu!
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

Ross. Farewell, father.

Old M. God's benison go with you; and with those
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

Scene I — *Forres. The palace*

Enter Banquo

Ban. Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women promised, and, I fear,
Thou play'dst most foully for 't: yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them —
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine —
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope? But hush! no more.

Sennet sounded. Enter Macbeth, *as king,* Lady Macbeth, *as queen,* Lennox, Ross, Lords, Ladies, *and* Attendants

Macb. Here's our chief guest.
Lady M. If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-thing unbecoming.
Macb. To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.
Ban. Let your highness
Command upon me; to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.
Macb. Ride you this afternoon?
Ban. Ay, my good lord.
Macb. We should have else desired your good advice,

Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.
Is't far you ride?

Ban. As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.

Macb. Fail not our feast.

Ban. My lord, I will not.

Macb. We hear, our bloody cousins are bestow'd
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention: but of that to-morrow,
When therewithal we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

Ban. Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon 's.

Macb. I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell. [*Exit Banquo.*
Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night: to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone: while then, God be with you!
[*Exeunt all but Macbeth, and an attendant.*
Sirrah, a word with you: attend those men
Our pleasure?

Atten. They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

Macb. Bring them before us. [*Exit Attendant.*
To be thus is nothing;

But to be safely thus. — Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd: 't is much he dares;
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear: and, under him,
My Genius is rebuked; as, it is said,
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him: then prophet-like
They hail'd him father to a line of kings:
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come fate into the list,
And champion me to the utterance! Who's there?

Re-enter Attendant, *with two* Murderers

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.
[*Exit Attendant.*
Was it not yesterday we spoke together?
First Mur. It was, so please your highness.
Macb. Well then, now

Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know
That it was he in the times past which held you
So under fortune, which you thought had been
Our innocent self: this I made good to you
In our last conference, pass'd in probation with you,
How you were borne in hand, how cross'd, the instruments,
Who wrought with them, and all things else that might
To half a soul and to a notion crazed
Say "Thus did Banquo."

First Mur. You made it known to us.

Macb. I did so, and went further, which is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature
That you can let this go? Are you so gospell'd
To pray for this good man and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave
And beggar'd yours for ever?

First Mur. We are men, my liege.

Macb. Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs and demi-wolves are clept
All by the name of dogs: the valued file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed, whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike: and so of men.

Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say 't;
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.
Sec. Mur. I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.
First Mur. And I another
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it, or be rid on't.
Macb. Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.
Both Mur. True, my lord.
Macb. So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life: and though I could
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
Who I myself struck down; and thence it is,
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.
Sec. Mur. We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.
First Mur. Though our lives —

Macb. Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most
I will advise you where to plant yourselves;
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,
The moment on't; for't must be done to-night,
And something from the palace; always thought
That I require a clearness: and with him —
To leave no rubs nor botches in the work —
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart:
I'll come to you anon.

Both Mur. We are resolved, my lord.

Macb. I'll call upon you straight: abide within.
[*Exeunt Murderers.*
It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exit.*

Scene II — *The palace*

Enter Lady Macbeth *and a* Servant

Lady M. Is Banquo gone from court?

Serv. Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

Lady M. Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.

Serv. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*

Lady M. Nought's had, all's spent.
Where our desire is got without content:
'T is safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter Macbeth

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy
Should be without regard: what's done is done.

Macb. We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it:
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly: better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further.

Lady M. Come on;
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.

Macb. So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you:
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo;
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue:
Unsafe the while, that we
Must lave our honours in these flattering streams,
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.

Lady M. You must leave this.

Macb. O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

Lady M. But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

Macb. There's comfort yet; they are assailable;
Then be thou jocund: ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's summons
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

Lady M. What's to be done?

Macb. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood:
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still:
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
So, prithee, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III — *A park near the palace*

Enter three Murderers

First Mur. But who did bid thee join with us?

Third Mur. Macbeth.

Sec. Mur. He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers

Our offices and what we have to do
To the direction just.
First Mur. Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
Now spurs the lated traveller apace
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
The subject of our watch.
Third Mur. Hark! I hear horses.
Ban. [*Within*] Give us a light there, ho!
Sec. Mur. Then 't is he: the rest
That are within the note of expectation
Already are i' the court.
First Mur. His horses go about.
Third Mur. Almost a mile: but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.
Sec. Mur. A light, a light!

Enter Banquo, *and* Fleance *with a torch*

Third Mur. 'T is he.
First Mur. Stand to 't.
Ban. It will be rain to-night.
First Mur. Let it come down.
[*They set upon Banquo.*
Ban. O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou mayst revenge. O slave!
[*Dies. Fleance escapes.*
Third Mur. Who did strike out the light?
First Mur. Was 't not the way?
Third Mur. There 's but one down; the son is fled.

Sec. Mur. We have lost
Best half of our affair.
First Mur. Well, let's away, and say how much is done. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *The same. Hall in the palace*

A banquet prepared. Enter Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Ross, Lennox, Lords, *and* Attendants

Macb. You know your own degrees; sit down: at first
And last the hearty welcome.
Lords. Thanks to your majesty.
Macb. Ourself will mingle with society,
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time
We will require her welcome.
Lady M. Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

First Murderer *appears at the door*

Macb. See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i' the midst:
Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure
The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There's blood upon thy face.
Mur. 'T is Banquo's then.
Macb. 'T is better thee without than he within.
Is he dispatch'd?
Mur. My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

Macb. Thou art the best o' the cut-throats: yet he's good
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil.
Mur. Most royal sir,
Fleance is 'scaped.
Macb. Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air:
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?
Mur. Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.
Macb. Thanks for that:
There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for the present. Get thee gone: to-morrow
We'll hear, ourselves, again. [*Exit Murderer.*
Lady M. My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold
That is not often vouch'd, while 't is a-making,
'T is given with welcome: to feed were best at home;
From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting were bare without it.
Macb. Sweet remembrancer!
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!
Len. May't please your highness sit.
[*The Ghost of Banquo enters, and sits in Macbeth's place.*

Macb. Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,
Were the graced person of our Banquo present;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance!
Ross. His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness
To grace us with your royal company.
Macb. The table's full.
Len. Here is a place reserved, sir.
Macb. Where?
Len. Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness?
Macb. Which of you have done this?
Lords. What, my good lord?
Macb. Thou canst not say I did it: never shake
Thy gory locks at me.
Ross. Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not well.
Lady M. Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat;
The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well: if much you note him,
You shall offend him and extend his passion:
Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man?
Macb. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.
Lady M. O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear:
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,

Impostors to true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

Macb. Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.
If charnel-houses and our graves must send
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites. [*Ghost vanishes.*

Lady M. What, quite unmann'd in folly?

Macb. If I stand here, I saw him.

Lady M. Fie, for shame!

Macb. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,
Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal;
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
Too terrible for the ear: the time has been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools: this is more strange
Than such a murder is.

Lady M. My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

Macb. I do forget.
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.

I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,
And all to all.

Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.

Enter Ghost

Macb. Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with!

Lady M. Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom: 't is no other;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

Macb. What man dare, I dare:
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble: or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with my sword;
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence! [*Ghost vanishes.*
Why, so: being gone,
I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

Lady M. You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired disorder.

Macb. Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder? You make me strange

Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blanch'd with fear.
Ross. What sights, my lord?
Lady M. I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;
Question enrages him. At once, good night:
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.
Len. Good night; and better health
Attend his majesty!
Lady M. A kind good night to all!
[*Exeunt all but Macbeth and Lady M.*
Macb. It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood:
Stones have been known to move and trees to speak;
Augurs and understood relations have
By magot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth
The secret'st man of blood. What is the night?
Lady M. Almost at odds with morning, which is which.
Macb. How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person
At our great bidding?
Lady M. Did you send to him, sir?
Macb. I hear it by the way; but I will send:
There's not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters:
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,

All causes shall give way: I am in blood
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er:
Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd.
Lady M. You lack the season of all natures, sleep.
Macb. Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
Is the initiate fear that wants hard use:
We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

[Scene V — *A heath*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches, *meeting* Hecate

First Witch. Why, how now, Hecate! you look angerly.
Hec. Have I not reason, beldams as you are.
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never call'd to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now: get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i' the morning: thither he
Will come to know his destiny:
Your vessels and your spells provide,

Your charms and every thing beside.
I am for the air; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end:
Great business must be wrought ere noon:
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound;
I'll catch it ere it comes to ground:
And that distill'd by magic sleights
Shall raise such artificial sprites
As by the strength of their illusion
Shall draw him on to his confusion:
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear:
And you all know, security is mortals' chiefest enemy.
[*Music and a song within:* "Come away, come away," &c.
Hark! I am call'd; my little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [*Exit.*
First Witch. Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back again.] [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI — *Forres. The palace*

Enter Lennox *and another* Lord

Len. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret further: only, I say,
Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth: marry, he was dead:
And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late;
Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance kill'd,

For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? damned fact!
How did it grieve Macbeth! did he not straight
In pious rage the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?
Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;
For't would have anger'd any heart alive
To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well: and I do think
That had he Duncan's sons under his key —
As, an't please heaven, he shall not — they should find
What't were to kill a father; so should Fleance.
But, peace! for from broad words and 'cause he fail'd
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear
Macduff lives in disgrace: sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself?

Lord. The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious Edward with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect: thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward:
That, by the help of these — with Him above
To ratify the work — we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,

Do faithful homage and receive free honours:
All which we pine for now: and this report
Hath so exasperate their king that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

Len. Sent he to Macduff?

Lord. He did: and with an absolute "Sir, not I," 40
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,
And hums, as who should say "You'll rue the time
That clogs me with this answer."

Len. And that well might
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accursed!

Lord. I'll send my prayers with him.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

Scene I — *A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches

First Witch. Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

Sec. Witch. Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whined.

Third Witch. Harpier cries, 'T is time, 't is time.

First Witch. Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone

Days and nights has thirty one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charm'd pot.
All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.
Sec. Witch. Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.
All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.
Third Witch. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,
Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab:
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our cauldron.
All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.
Sec. Witch. Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

[*Enter* Hecate *to the other three* Witches

Hec. O, well done! I commend your pains;
And every one shall share i' the gains:
And now about the cauldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in. [*Music and a song:* "Black spirits," &c. *Hecate retires.*]

Sec. Witch. By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.
Open, locks,
Whoever knocks!

Enter Macbeth

Macb. How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is't you do?

All. A deed without a name.

Macb. I conjure you, by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:
Though you untie the winds and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure
Of nature's germens tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken; answer me
To what I ask you.

First Witch. Speak.

Sec. Witch. Demand.

Third Witch. We'll answer.
First Witch. Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters?
Macb. Call 'em; let me see 'em.
First Witch. Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.
All. Come, high or low;
Thyself and office deftly show!

Thunder. *First* Apparition: *an armed* Head

Macb. Tell me, thou unknown power, —
First Witch. He knows thy thought:
Hear his speech, but say thou nought.
First App. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff;
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.
[*Descends.*
Macbeth. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks;
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright: but one word more, —
First Witch. He will not be commanded: here's another,
More potent than the first.

Thunder. *Second* Apparition: *a bloody* Child

Sec. App. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!
Macb. Had I three ears, I'ld hear thee.
Sec. App. Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn

The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends.*

Macb. Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

Thunder. Third Apparition: *a* Child *crowned, with a tree in his hand*

What is this
That rises like the issue of a king,
And wears upon his baby-brow the round
And top of sovereignty?

All. Listen, but speak not to't.

Third App. Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him. [*Descends.*

Macb. That will never be:
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good!
Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art
Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

All. Seek to know no more.

Macb. I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?

First Witch. Show! [*Hautboys.*

Sec. Witch. Show!

Third Witch. Show!

All. Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart!

A show of Eight Kings, *the last with a glass in his hand;* Banquo's Ghost *following*

Macb. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!
Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs. And thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.
A third is like the former. Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!
What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?
Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more:
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more; and some I see
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry:
Horrible sight! Now, I see, 't is true;
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his. [*Apparitions vanish.*]
What, is this so?

[*First Witch.* Ay, sir, all this is so: but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?
Come sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show the best of our delights:
I'll charm the air to give a sound,

While you perform your antic round;
That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay. [*Music. The Witches dance, and then vanish, with Hecate.*]

Macb. Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar!
Come in, without there!

Enter Lennox

Len. What's your grace's will?

Macb. Saw you the weird sisters?

Len. No, my lord.

Macb. Came they not by you?

Len. No, indeed, my lord.

Macb. Infected be the air whereon they ride;
And damn'd all those that trust them! I did hear
The galloping of horse: who was't came by?

Len. 'T is two or three, my lord, that bring you word
Macduff is fled to England.

Macb. Fled to England!

Len. Ay, my good lord.

Macb. Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits:
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it: from this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword

His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.
But no more sights! — Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *Fife. Macduff's castle*

Enter Lady Macduff, *her* Son, *and* Ross

L. Macd. What had he done, to make him fly the land?

Ross. You must have patience, madam.

L. Macd. He had none:
His flight was madness: when our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.

Ross. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

L. Macd. Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion and his titles in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;
He wants the natural touch: for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.

Ross. My dearest coz,
I pray you, school yourself: but for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much further;
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors

And do not know ourselves, when we hold rumour
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way and move. I take my leave of you:
Shall not be long but I'll be here again:
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before. My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!

L. Macd. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

Ross. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort:
I take my leave at once. [*Exit.*

L. Macd. Sirrah, your father's dead:
And what will you do now? How will you live?

Son. As birds do, mother.

L. Macd. What, with worms and flies?

Son. With what I get, I mean; and so do they.

L. Macd. Poor bird! thou'ldst never fear the net nor lime,
The pitfall nor the gin.

Son. Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.

L. Macd. Yes, he is dead: how wilt thou do for a father?

Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband?

L. Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

Son. Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

L. Macd. Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet, i' faith,
With wit enough for thee.

Son. Was my father a traitor, mother?

L. Macd. Ay, that he was.

Son. What is a traitor?

L. Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.

Son. And be all traitors that do so?

L. Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

Son. And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

L. Macd. Every one.

Son. Who must hang them?

L. Macd. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.

L. Macd. Now, God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father?

Son. If he were dead, you'ld weep for him: if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

L. Macd. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

Enter a Messenger

Mess. Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,
Though in your state of honour I am perfect.
I doubt some danger does approach you nearly:
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;
To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!

I dare abide no longer. [*Exit.*

L. Macd. Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world; where to do harm
Is often laudable, to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas,
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say I have done no harm?

Enter Murderers

What are these faces?

First Mur. Where is your husband? 80

L. Macd. I hope, in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou mayst find him.

First Mur. He's a traitor.

Son. Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd villain!

First Mur. What, you egg! [*Stabbing him.*
Young fry of treachery!

Son. He has kill'd me, mother:
Run away, I pray you! [*Dies.*

[*Exit Lady Macduff, crying* "Murder!"
Exeunt Murderers, following her.

Scene III — *England. Before the King's Palace*

Enter Malcolm *and* Macduff

Mal. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Macd. Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom: each new morn

New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolour.

Mal. What I believe I'll wail,
What know believe, and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest: you have loved him well.
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

Macd. I am not treacherous.

Mal. But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon;
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose:
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell:
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

Macd. I have lost my hopes.

Mal. Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,

But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

Macd. Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny! lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee: wear thou thy wrongs;
The title is affeer'd! Fare thee well, lord:
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.

Mal. Be not offended:
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds: I think withal
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here from gracious England have I offer
Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before,
More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

Macd. What should he be?

Mal. It is myself I mean: in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
With my confineless harms.

Macd. Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd

In evils to top Macbeth.

Mal. I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name: but there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness: your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids could not fill up
The cistern of my lust, and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear
That did oppose my will: better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.

Macd. Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours: you may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.
We have willing dames enough; there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined.

Mal. With this there grows
In my most ill-composed affection such
A staunchless avarice that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
Desire his jewels and this other's house:
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more; that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

Macd. This avarice,

Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear;
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,
Of your mere own: all these are portable,
With other graces weigh'd.

Mal. But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them, but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting in many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.

Macd. O Scotland, Scotland!

Mal. If such a one be fit to govern, speak:
I am as I have spoken.

Macd. Fit to govern!
No, not to live. O nation miserable,
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accursed,
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king: the queen that bore thee,
Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she lived. Fare thee well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!

Mal. Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste: but God above
Deal between thee and me! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeak mine own detraction, here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet
Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
At no time broke my faith, would not betray
The devil to his fellow, and delight
No less in truth than life: my first false speaking
Was this upon myself: what I am truly,
Is thine and my poor country's to command:
Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,
Already at a point, was setting forth.
Now we'll together; and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

Macd. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
'T is hard to reconcile.

Enter a Doctor

Mal. Well; more anon. — Comes the king forth,
I pray you?

Doct. Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure: their malady convinces

The great assay of art; but at his touch —
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand —
They presently amend.

Mal. I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*

Macd. What 's the disease he means?

Mal. 'T is called the evil:
A most miraculous work in this good king;
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
Himself best knows: but strangely-visited people,
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures,
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers: and 't is spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
And sundry blessings hang about his throne
That speak him full of grace.

Enter Ross

Macd. See, who comes here?

Mal. My countryman; but yet I know him not.

Macd. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

Mal. I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers!

Ross. Sir, amen.

Macd. Stands Scotland where it did?

Ross. Alas, poor country!
Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave; where nothing,

But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air
Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy: the dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.

Macd. O, relation
Too nice, and yet too true!

Mal. What's the newest grief?

Ross. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker:
Each minute teems a new one.

Macd. How does my wife?

Ross. Why, well.

Macd. And all my children?

Ross. Well, too.

Macd. The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace?

Ross. No; they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.

Macd. Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes 't?

Ross. When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were out;
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot:
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.

Mal. Be't their comfort

We are coming thither: gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.
Ross. Would I could answer
This comfort with the like! But I have words
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch them.
Macd. What concern they?
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief
Due to some single breast?
Ross. No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe; though the main part
Pertains to you alone.
Macd. If it be mine,
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it.
Ross. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.
Macd. Hum! I guess at it.
Ross. Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,
To add the death of you.
Mal. Merciful heaven!
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break.
Macd. My children too?
Ross. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.

Macd. And I must be from thence!
My wife kill'd too?
Ross. I have said.
Mal. Be comforted:
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.
Macd. He has no children. All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?
Mal. Dispute it like a man.
Macd. I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man:
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!
Mal. Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.
Macd. O, I could play the woman with mine eyes
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission; front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!
Mal. This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave: Macbeth

Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you may:
The night is long that never finds the day. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

Scene I — *Dunsinane. Ante-room in the castle*

Enter a Doctor of Physic *and a* Waiting-Gentlewoman

Doct. I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

Gent. Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon 't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

Doct. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching! In this slumbery agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

Gent. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

Doct. You may to me: and 't is most meet you should.

Gent. Neither to you nor any one; having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter Lady Macbeth, *with a taper*

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

Doct. How came she by that light?

Gent. Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 't is her command.

Doct. You see, her eyes are open.

Gent. Ay, but their sense is shut.

Doct. What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady M. Yet here's a spot.

Doct. Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

Lady M. Out, damned spot! out, I say! — One: two: why, then 't is time to do 't. — Hell is murky! — Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? — Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him.

Doct. Do you mark that?

Lady M. The thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now? — What, will these hands ne'er be clean? — No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.

Doct. Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

Gent. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known.

Lady M. Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Doct. What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

Gent. I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

Doct. Well, well, well, —

Gent. Pray God it be, sir.

Doct. The disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

Lady M. Wash your hands, put on your night-gown; look not so pale. — I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried: he cannot come out on's grave.

Doct. Even so?

Lady M. To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone. — To bed, to bed, to bed! [*Exit.*

Doct. Will she go now to bed?

Gent. Directly.

Doct. Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets:
More needs she the divine than the physician.
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night:
My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.

Gent. Good night, good doctor.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *The country near Dunsinane*

Drum and colours. Enter Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, *and* Soldiers

Ment. The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward and the good Macduff:
Revenges burn in them; for their dear causes
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
Excite the mortified man.

Ang. Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.

Caith. Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

Len. For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file
Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son,
And many unrough youths that even now
Protest their first of manhood.

Ment. What does the tyrant?

Caith. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:
Some say he's mad; others that lesser hate him
Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause
Within the belt of rule.

Ang. Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love; now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

Ment. Who then shall blame

His pester'd senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?
Caith. Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 't is truly owed:
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,
And with him pour we in our country's purge
Each drop of us.
Len. Or so much as it needs,
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam.
[*Exeunt, marching.*

Scene III — *Dunsinane. A room in the castle*

Enter Macbeth, Doctor, *and* Attendants

Macb. Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:
"Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures:
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

Enter a Servant

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!
Where got'st thou that goose look?
Serv. There is ten thousand —

Macb. Geese, villain?
Serv. Soldiers, sir.
Macb. Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, wheyface?
Serv. The English force, so please you.
Macb. Take thy face hence. [*Exit Servant.*
Seyton! — I am sick at heart,
When I behold — Seyton, I say! — This push
Will cheer me ever, or disease me now.
I have lived long enough: my way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.
Seyton!

Enter Seyton

Sey. What is your gracious pleasure?
Macb. What news more?
Sey. All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.
Macb. I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.
Give me my armour.
Sey. 'T is not needed yet.
Macb. I'll put it on.
Send out moe horses; skirr the country round;
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armour.

How does your patient, doctor?
Doct. Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
That keep her from her rest.
Macb. Cure her of that.
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?
Doct. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.
Macb. Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.
Come, put mine armour on; give me my staff.
Seyton, send out. Doctor, the thanes fly from me.
Come, sir, dispatch. If thou couldst, doctor, cast
The water of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again. — Pull't off, I say. —
What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?
Doct. Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.
Macb. Bring it after me.
I will not be afraid of death and bane,
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.
Doct. [*Aside.*] Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *Country near Birnam wood*

Drum and colours. Enter Malcolm, *old* Siward *and his* Son, Macduff, Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, Ross, *and* Soldiers, *marching*

Mal. Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.
Ment. We doubt it nothing.
Siw. What wood is this before us?
Ment. The wood of Birnam.
Mal. Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear't before him: thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host and make discovery
Err in report of us.
Soldiers. It shall be done.
Siw. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before't.
Mal. 'T is his main hope:
For where there is advantage to be given,
Both more and less have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things
Whose hearts are absent too.
Macd. Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.
Siw. The time approaches
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate:
Towards which advance the war.

[*Exeunt, marching.*

Scene V — *Dunsinane. Within the castle*

Enter Macbeth, Seyton, *and* Soldiers, *with drum and colours*

Macb. Hang out our banners on the outward walls;
The cry is still "They come:" our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up:
Were they not forced with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home.
[*A cry of women within.*
What is that noise?

Sey. It is the cry of women, my good lord. [*Exit.*

Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears:
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir
As life were in't: I have supp'd full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

Re-enter Seyton

Wherefore was that cry?

Sey. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macb. She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools

The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger

Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.
Mess. Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.
Macb. Well, say, sir.
Mess. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.
Macb. Liar and slave!
Mess. Let me endure your wrath, if 't be not so:
Within this three mile may you see it coming;
I say, a moving grove.
Macb. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling thee: if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.
I pull in resolution, and begin
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend
That lies like truth: "Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane:" and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
I gin to be aweary of the sun,

And wish the estate o' the world were now undone. 50
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI — *Dunsinane. Before the castle*

Drum and colours. Enter Malcolm, *old* Siward, Macduff, *and their* Army, *with boughs*

Mal. Now near enough: your leavy screens
throw down,
And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,
Lead our first battle: worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon's what else remains to do,
According to our order.
Siw. Fare you well.
Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.
Macb. Make all our trumpets speak; give
them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene VII — *Another part of the field*

Alarums. Enter Macbeth

Macb. They have tied me to a stake; I cannot
fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the course. What's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter young Siward

Yo. Siw. What is thy name?
Macb. Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.

Yo. Siw. No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.
Macb. My name's Macbeth.
Yo. Siw. The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.
Macb. No, nor more fearful.
Yo. Siw. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.
[*They fight and young Siward is slain.*
Macb. Thou wast born of woman.
But swords I smile at, and weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born. [*Exit.*

Alarums. Enter Macduff

Macd. That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face!
If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms
Are hired to bear their staves: either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword with an unbatter'd edge
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune!
And more I beg not. [*Exit. Alarums.*

Enter Malcolm *and old* Siward

Siw. This way, my lord; the castle's gently render'd:

The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;
The noble thanes do bravely in the war;
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.
Mal. We have met with foes
That strike beside us.
Siw. Enter, sir, the castle.
[*Exeunt. Alarums.*

Scene VIII — *Another part of the field*

Enter Macbeth

Macb. Why should I play the Roman fool, and die
On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them.

Enter Macduff

Macd. Turn, hell-hound, turn!
Macb. Of all men else I have avoided thee:
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.
Macd. I have no words:
My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out! [*They fight.*
Macb. Thou losest labour:
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed:
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.
Macd. Despair thy charm;
And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb

Untimely ripp'd.

Macb. Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

Macd. Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time:
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
"Here may you see the tyrant."

Macb. I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last. Before my body
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,
And damn'd be him that first cries "Hold, enough!"

[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.*

Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colours, Malcolm, *old* Siward, Ross, *the other* Thanes, *and* Soldiers

Mal. I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

Siw. Some must go off: and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

Mal. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

Ross. Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt:

He only lived but till he was a man;
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.
Siw. Then he is dead?
Ross. Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.
Siw. Had he his hurts before?
Ross. Ay, on the front.
Siw. Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death:
And so, his knell is knoll'd.
Mal. He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.
Siw. He's worth no more:
They say he parted well, and paid his score:
And so, God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

Re-enter Macduff, *with* Macbeth's *head*

Macd. Hail, king! for so thou art: behold, where stands
The usurper's cursed head: the time is free:
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:
Hail, King of Scotland!
All. Hail, King of Scotland! [*Flourish.*
Mal. We shall not spend a large expense of time

Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honour named. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,
As calling home our exiled friends abroad
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,
Who, as 't is thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,
We will perform in measure, time and place:
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbott	Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, 3d edition.
F 1 or F	First Folio (1623) of Shakespeare's plays.
F 2	Second Folio (1632).
F 3	Third Folio (1663 and 1664).
F 4	Fourth Folio (1685).
Ff	The four Folios.
Holinshed	Holinshed's *Chronicle of Scotland*.
New Eng. Dict. . .	*A New English Dictionary*, ed. Murray.
Scot	Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft*.

For the meaning of words not given in these notes, the student is referred to the Glossary at the end of the volume.

The numbering of the lines corresponds to that of the Globe edition.

Dramatis Personæ. This list is not in the Ff. It was first given by Rowe.

ACT I — SCENE 1

The division into Acts and Scenes is found in the Ff, but no notes of locality are there given. Most of the stage-directions are also from the Ff.

A desert place. So the Cambridge editors. Line 6 shows that this scene does not take place "upon the heath," where the witches afterwards meet Macbeth.

The play opens fittingly in an atmosphere of moral and physical gloom. The first scene, as Coleridge pointed out, strikes a spiritual keynote. This is a tragedy of the triumph of evil: we are in a world of moral anarchy, symbolized by the withered beings, to whom "foul is fair." In a drama, first impressions are lasting, and Shakespeare contrives to put the spectator in the right mood at once.

7. This line may be scanned as follows: "There' to | meet' | with' Mac | beth'." On the metre of the witch scenes in general, see Appendix H, § 1.

8–11. In the Ff these lines run —

> "**1.** I come, *Gray-Malkin.*
> *All.* *Padock* calls anon; faire is foule, and foule is faire."

The correction is due to Hunter.

Graymalkin, a cat, and ***Paddock,*** a frog or toad (see Glossary, *s. vv.*), are the familiars of two of the three witches. The familiar of the third witch, *Harpier*, is mentioned in iv. 1. 3. Upon the stage, of course, there will be unearthly mewing and so forth, which the witches are supposed to answer.

These familiars of wizards and witches were supposed to be devils attendant upon them in the shape of obscene creatures. Cf. King James the First's *Demonologie* (ed. 1616), p. 103, "To some of the baser sort he obliges himself to appear at their calling upon him, by such a proper name which he shews unto them, either in likeness of a Dog, a Cat, an Ape, or such-like other beast, or else to answere by a voice only;" and Reginald Scot, *Discovery of Witchcraft*, bk. 1, ch. 4, "Some say they can keep devils and spirits in the likenesse of todes and cats."

SCENE 2

A camp near Forres. The locality is taken from Holinshed.

In this scene Shakespeare, after his manner, puts us briefly in possession of the situation between Macbeth and Duncan. Macbeth is high in favor with the king, and, with the aid of Banquo, has repelled in one day rebels at home and foes from abroad. The best side of his character, his personal courage and resource in war, is brought out. He is "valour's minion" and "Bellona's bridegroom."

The irregular metre of this scene, and the discrepancies concerning the thane of Cawdor and the mission of Ross (see notes on l. 53; 3. 73, 108; 4. 5), have led editors to believe that we possess the play only in a mutilated form. See Introduction, pp. v, vi. Some of the metrical difficulties can be explained, and some disappear with a simple rearrangement of the Ff lines, but ll. 20 and 51 certainly suggest "cuts."

1. ***bloody.*** "This word 'bloody' reappears on almost every page, and runs like a red thread through the whole piece; in no other of Shakespeare's dramas is it so frequent" (Bodenstedt).

3. ***sergeant*** must be scanned as equivalent to a trisyllable. A sergeant was not originally a petty officer, but a personal attendant on the king or commander, lower in rank than an esquire.

5. The omission of a syllable may often be accounted for by the interposition of a natural pause, as here, where the speaker turns from one hearer to another; or, as in l. 7, between two speeches. Or, as an alternative, *Hail* may be so emphasized as to dispense with an unaccented syllable.

9. ***choke their art,*** *i. e.* render it useless. The sense of *choke* here is metaphorical.

Macdonwald. So F 1. Holinshed has *Macdowald.*

10. ***for to that,*** *i. e.* because. A more usual form is *for that*, cf. iv. 3. 185. *That* is added to give a conjunctival force to the preposition; but *for* by itself can have the sense of "because." See Abbott, §§ 151, 287.

12. ***the western isles,*** the group of islands lying west of Ross, of which Lewis is the chief. Perhaps, however, Ireland is included.

13. ***Of*** is used by Shakespeare after verbs of supplying and filling. See Abbott, § 171, and cf. *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 2. 24, "I am provided of a torch-bearer."

kerns and gallowglasses. These names frequently recur in descriptions of Ireland: properly *kerns* are light-armed, *gallowglasses* heavy-armed infantry; here they are both used in a depreciatory sense, as in *Richard II*, ii. 1. 155—

> "Now for our Irish wars;
> We must supplant these rough rug-headed kerns."

14. ***quarrel.*** Ff have *quarry.* The emendation is Hanmer's, and is justified by the parallel passage in Holinshed. *Quarrel* is frequent in the sense of "cause," as in iv. 3. 137, "our warranted quarrel."

15. ***Show'd like,*** *i. e.* wore the false appearance of. Cf. i. 3. 54, "which outwardly ye show."

16. ***that name,*** *i. e.* the name of "brave."

20. The irregular line may be due to the haste and excitement of the speaker; but it is more likely that there has been some mutilation, which would also account for the difficulty in the next line.

21. ***Which.*** The only possible antecedent, so far as the sense goes, is *Macbeth*, and not *the slave.*

22. ***nave.*** So Ff. See Glossary.

24. ***cousin.*** The word is often merely a title of courtesy given by the king to his nobles, or by them to each other: cf. i. 3. 127. But, according to Holinshed, Duncan and Macbeth were actually first cousins, each being son of one of the two daughters of King Malcolm.

25. The comparison is between the moment of victory, which was also the moment for a new attack, and the east, the quarter of sunrise, from which storms often come.

30. ***skipping.*** The epithet is scornful of the kerns. They were light-armed and also cowardly.

31. ***surveying vantage,*** *i. e.* perceiving a favorable opportunity.

34. ***captains*** must be scanned as a trisyllable, like *sergeant* in l. 3.

Yes, upon the stage, will receive an ironical intonation.

37, 38. The Ff read —

> "As cannons overcharged with double cracks,
> So they doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe."

This gives l. 38 a superfluous foot. Several attempts at correction have been made. The Cambridge editors, following Keightley, print *So they* as the last words of a mutilated line; but the sense is complete as the lines stand. The arrangement of the text is less jarring, rhythmically, than that of the Ff.

37. ***cracks.*** Shakespeare uses the word of any sudden burst of sound; here of the discharge of cannon; in *The Tempest*, i. 2. 203, of thunder. In iv. 1. 117 of this play occurs the phrase "the crack of doom."

38. ***Doubly redoubled.*** Cf. *Richard II*, i. 3. 80, "blows, doubly redoubled."

40. ***memorize,*** *i. e.* make memorable; ***Golgotha*** signifies "the place of a skull." Cf. *Matthew*, xxvii. 33.

41. The irregular line has a dramatic point. The soldier breaks off, unable to proceed for loss of blood.

Enter Ross and Angus. So Ff. Angus does not speak, nor is he spoken to, but the "we are sent" of i. 3. 100 shows that he was present.

49. The Norwegian banners have been captured when Ross speaks, and Malone explains "the colours idly flapped about serving only to cool the conquerors instead of being proudly displayed by their former possessors." But the phrase ***flout the sky*** certainly seems to imply defiance, not defeat; cf. *King John*, v. 1. 72, "Mocking the air, with colours idly spread;" and, if so, we must suppose that Ross is referring, in a vivid historic present, to the moment of the first attack, when the Scotch were "cold" with alarm.

50. ***Norway,*** King of Norway.

51. Here again there would seem to be a gap in the text.

53. There is a superfluous syllable in this line after the second foot, as well as at the end.

"The thane' | of Caw'(dor) | began' | a dis' | mal con'(flict)."

There are discrepancies in the references to the thane of Cawdor and his fate made here and in the following scenes; cf. notes to i. 3. 73, 108; i. 4. 5.

54. ***Bellona,*** the Roman goddess of war.

lapp'd in proof, clad in strong armor; cf. Glossary, *s. vv. lapped* and *proof.*

55. ***self-comparisons,*** *i. e.* comparisons between their two selves. *Self* can modify the sense of a word with which it is compounded in almost any fashion. Thus "self-borne arms" in *Richard II*, ii. 3. 80, *i. e.* arms divided against themselves, civil war.

56. Theobald corrected the Ff punctuation, *Point against point, rebellious arm 'gainst arm.*

58. We may have here one twelve-syllable line, excused by the overlapping of speeches; or ***That now*** may be a short introductory line; cf. Abbott, § 511.

That is often used for "so that" in Shakespeare. Abbott, § 283, and cf. i. 7. 8; ii. 2. 7, 23; iv. 3. 6, 82.

61. ***Saint Colme's inch,*** or "Inchcolm," the Isle of St. Columba, in the Firth of Forth. *Inis* is Celtic for an island.

64. The additional foot in this line makes it awkward to scan.

SCENE 3

A heath near Forres. This note of locality is in accordance with the indications of i. 1. 6 and i. 3. 39, 77.

This is the critical scene of the First Act, the Temptation Scene. The doubtful suggestions of the witches outwardly symbolize the secret workings of Macbeth's own heart. He is not now for the first time tempted; the "supernatural soliciting" echoes dark hopes already formed: murder has been for some time fantastical in his thoughts. He has even, at a period before the play opens, broken his enterprise to his wife (i. 7. 48). There is a remarkable contrast between the effect which the meeting with the weird sisters has upon Macbeth and Banquo respectively. Banquo sees nothing ominous in the prophecy; after all, Macbeth is Duncan's cousin and a great warrior; he might well, by the customs of a military nation, be chosen for the throne before the boy Malcolm. But for Macbeth, it points at once to his own half-formed designs;

and the partial fulfilment, which the message of Ross announces, perturbs him still more. For the present, however, he is content to wait, in hope that chance will bring him the coveted dignity without his stir. It should be noticed also that Banquo is curious as to the nature of the weird sisters; he inclines to think them bubbles of the earth, or creatures merely imaginary. Macbeth has no such doubts; the witches are in keeping with his mood; his only anxiety is to learn more from their supernatural knowledge.

2. ***Killing swine.*** The accusation against witches of casting an evil eye upon swine and other domestic animals appears to have been a very common one; cf. Scot, bk. ii, ch. 9.

6. ***Aroint thee:*** so F 1, F 2. See Glossary.

rump-fed. Fed on refuse, offal. Furness quotes Colepepper, "The chief cooks in noblemen's families, colleges, etc., anciently claimed the emoluments or kitchen fees of kidneys, fat, *rumps*, etc., which they sold to the poor."

7. ***the Tiger*** was a common name for a ship. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, v. 1. 65, of Antonio, "This is he that did the Tiger board." In Hakluyt's *Voyages* are records of a voyage made by Ralph Fitch and others in 1583. They went in the ship "Tiger" of London to Tripolis, and thence by caravan to Aleppo.

8. ***a sieve.*** Witches were believed to have the power of going to sea in a sieve or an egg-shell. Cf. Scot, i. 4, and the *Life of Dr. Fian*, referred to in Appendix D.

9. ***a rat without a tail.*** Witches could transform themselves into the shape of brutes, but might be known by the absence of a tail. This peculiarity is familiar in werewolf stories. Just so the devil in human shape may be discovered by his cloven foot.

10. What the witch threatens to do is to gnaw a hole in the "Tiger."

11. ***a wind.*** Witches habitually sold winds to sailors. So Bartholomew Anglicus, in Mr. Steele's *Mediæval Lore*, of the Finlanders, "And so to men that sail by their coasts, and also to men that abide with them for default of wind, they proffer wind to sailing, and so they sell wind." For their power over the elements cf. also Scot, i. 4.

15. There is no difficulty in this line. The witch has power to make a wind blow to any port she will; for *blow* in the sense of "blow upon," cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 109, "Air, quoth he, thy cheeks may blow." Nothing is more common in Elizabethan grammar than the omission of a preposition after a verb, especially a verb of motion. See Abbott, 198 *sqq*.

17. ***the shipman's card.*** Either a "chart," or the card upon which the points are marked in a compass.

20. ***pent-house lid,*** the eyelid, so called because its slope is like that of a pent-house or lean-to.

21. ***forbid,*** under a curse, prayed against. The original sense of "bid" is "pray."

23. The commonest charge laid against witches was that of causing their enemies to waste away. Generally this was done by making an image of wax and applying tortures to it. Cf. Scot, xii. 16. The belief in this is the basis of Rossetti's fine ballad of *Sister Helen.*

25. The power, within certain limits, of the witches to raise tempests is dwelt on in James I's *Demonologie* (1616), p. 117. Cf. also Scot, i. 4, and the *Life of Dr. Fian.*

31. The point of the first part of this scene is to set forth the malicious character of the witches, revelling in the thought of doing wanton evil.

32. ***weird sisters.*** The Ff read *weyward;* but *weird* suits the trochaic metre, and is justified by Holinshed, who takes the phrase from Bellenden. Gavin Douglas also uses it to translate the Latin *Parcæ.* See Glossary, *s. v.* If *weyward* is retained it must be taken as only another spelling of *weird,* and not = wilful. It is so used in Heywood's *The Late Witches of Lancashire,* "You look like one of the Scottish wayward sisters."

33. James I, *Demonologie* (1616), p. 113, speaks of witches as "carried by the force of the spirit which is their conductor, either above the earth, or above the sea swiftly, to the place where they are to meet." Cf. also Scot, i. 4; ii. 14; iii. 1.

36. ***nine*** $= 3 \times 3$, has always been a mystical number.

38. Cf. i. 1. 10. Macbeth's repetition of the witches' words shows at once the harmony between his temper and theirs. We may suppose him to refer primarily either to the varying chances of the day; or to the contrast between his success and the stormy weather which the witches have called up. So at least Banquo might take it, but our attention is called by the words to the mixed thoughts and qualities of Macbeth's heart.

42. ***or*** does not introduce an alternative theory of the nature of the witches, but an alternative way of putting the same question, "Are you human beings?"

46. ***beards.*** Witches were always supposed to be bearded; cf. Beaumont and Fletcher, *Honest Man's Fortune,* ii. 1 —

"And the women that
Come to us, for disguises must wear beards;
And that 's, they say, a token of a witch."

48. ***Glamis.*** On the pronunciation of this word cf. Appendix H, § 6. (ix).

51. Macbeth starts because the last prophecy of the witches recalls his own guilty imaginings.

53. ***fantastical, i. e.*** imaginary; cf. l. 139, and *Richard II*, i. 3. 299, "by thinking on fantastic summer's heat."

55, 56. ***present grace, noble having,*** and ***royal hope*** correspond to the three sentences of the prophecy.

58. The power of witches to see into the future is mentioned in Scot, i. 4. In the choice of his metaphor Shakespeare may have had in his mind certain accusations against them of transferring corn in the blade from one field to another and so forth.

Banquo, here and in ll. 107, 125, is skeptical of the prophetic power of the witches, and he is content to let things take their course, assuming that if the fulfilment is to come at all, it will be by natural means. Being conscious of innocence, he has no reason to be perturbed like Macbeth.

67. Banquo and Fleance were mythical ancestors of the House of Stuart. Authentic history knows nothing of them. Here and in iv. 1. 100 *sqq*. Shakespeare is able to pay a delicate compliment to James I.

70. Macbeth has remained rapt for a while after the witches' greeting. He recovers himself now, and attempts to gain further information from them.

71. ***Sinel.*** The real name of Macbeth's father was Finleg. In Fordun's *Scotichronicon* (iv. 44) he appears as "Finele," and of this Boethius, and Holinshed following him, make "Synele."

73. ***A prosperous gentleman.*** Yet in i. 2. 52 Ross speaks of Cawdor as in league with the Norwegians. We can hardly suppose that Macbeth is unaware of this. A reference to the passages of Holinshed used by Shakespeare for this and the preceding scenes will show that in the history the disgrace of Cawdor followed after an interval the Norwegian invasion. In writing this speech Shakespeare may have forgotten that he had altered that point. Or, of course, the discrepancy may be due to some rehandling of the play for stage purposes. Cf. Introduction, p. vi.

83. The plain, honest soldier regards supernatural apparitions as devices of the devil (cf. l. 123), better left undiscussed. This was

a common belief among Elizabethan writers, and recurs in *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 627.

84. *on* is somewhat freely used by Shakespeare where we should write "of." Cf. Abbott, §§ 138, 180 *sqq.*

the insane root. It is difficult to say what plant Shakespeare had in his mind. It may have been hemlock, whereof Greene says, in his *Never too Late* (1616), "You have eaten of the roots of hemlock, that makes men's eyes conceit unseen objects;" or it may have been henbane, of which Batman, *Upon Bartholomew, De proprietatibus rerum*, xviii. 87, says, "It is called *insane*, mad, for the use thereof is perilous, for if it be eate or dronke, it breedeth madness or slow lykness of sleepe. Therefore this herb is commonly called *mirilidium*, for it taketh away wit and reason." Or it may have been Holinshed's "mekilwort," which Boethius calls *solatrum amentiale, i.e.* deadly nightshade, and of which Gerarde says, "It causeth sleep, troubleth the mind, bringeth madness, if a few of the berries be inwardly taken." In North's translation of Plutarch's *Life of Antony*, which Shakespeare was probably reading about the time he wrote *Macbeth*, is a story of how the Romans in the Parthian war ate roots, among them one "that killed them, and made them out of their wits."

86. Macbeth already feels something of the jealousy of Banquo, which becomes an important motive later in the play.

91. ***personal venture.*** Cf. i. 2. 16.

93. ***Which should be thine or his, i. e.*** whether he ought to give and thou receive wonder or praise.

97, 98. ***hail Came.*** This is Rowe's emendation for the *tale Can* of the Ff. The phrase "thick as hail" is, of course, universal. Nearly all editors accept *Came*; some defend *tale*, and explain it "as quick as one could 'tell' or 'count' them."

103. The broken line with which the speech of Angus ends is characteristic of this play.

106. ***addition.*** See Glossary.

107. Banquo's aside emphasizes for the audience the partial fulfilment of the prophecy.

108. Cf. l. 73, note. In the next speech Angus's ignorance of the nature of Cawdor's crime seems inconsistent with i. 2. 52, and still more with his knowledge of the thane's confession (l. 115). And if Angus and Ross came straight from the king, when did this confession take place?

109. ***Who,*** for the omission of the antecedent cf. Abbott, § 251.

111. Abbott, § 461, attempts to scan ***Whether he was*** as one

foot — "Whe'er h' was." It is better to treat the redundant foot as due to the beginning of a new sentence in the line. Cf. Appendix H, § 5.

120. *trusted home, i. e.* trusted to the utmost; "if you take this partial fulfilment as proof of the truth of the complete prophecy." For the phrase cf. *Lear*, iii. 3. 13, "These injuries will be revenged home."

127. Note the absolute contrast between Banquo's sceptical and Macbeth's credulous reception of the same fact.

128. *prologues . . . act.* Shakespeare's plays abound in theatrical metaphors and similes; it must be remembered that he was actor as well as playwright.

135. *unfix my hair:* make it stand up — a common sign of terror. Cf. *Hamlet*, i. 5. 18 —

> "[Make] Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
> And each particular hair to stand an end,
> Like quills upon the fretful porpentine."

137, 138. *Present fears . . . imaginings.* This is characteristic of Macbeth. He can always act bravely in a moment of danger, but cannot bear the strain of thinking on the future.

139. *fantastical.* Cf. l. 53, note.

These lines may be paraphrased: "The mere conception of this possible murder shakes that commonwealth which is my single self. Surmise of the future smothers the function or action of my senses, and only what is to be, not what is, appears real and vivid to me."

140. *single, i. e.* simple. Cf. i. 6. 16.

143. For the present Macbeth finds a relief in deferring the struggle with temptation, and putting the accomplishment of his ambitions in the hands of chance.

147. It is a fatalistic sentiment in compressed phrase, which can only be explained by expansion: "The roughest day comes to an end, the fated hour must strike, time sets all straight."

runs. "Time and the hour" are practically one idea, but Shakespeare's syntax admits of a singular verb with two subjects; cf. Abbott, § 336.

150. Macbeth can play a part when necessary, and does so now. He has sufficiently made up his mind to wish not to incur suspicion.

151. *I. e.* in my memory.

152. The last four lines of Macbeth's speech are to Banquo alone.

154. *The interim having weigh'd it.* This is another of the compressed phrases that crowd this play; the sense is obvious.

The first three scenes of this act may be regarded as taking place on the same day. An interval of one night follows, allowing time for Cawdor's execution, and for the despatch of the letter to Lady Macbeth, which she is discovered reading in scene 5.

SCENE 4

The important point in the scene is the nomination of Malcolm as Duncan's successor. This takes away the hope that chance will crown Macbeth. He is at last brought face to face with the fact that if his ambition is to be satisfied, it must be by foul means.

The sudden resolution of the king to claim the hospitality of Inverness is the first of a series of lucky accidents. Cf. Introduction, p. xx.

The kingly character of Duncan, his simple attitude and absolute trust, are a foil to the black treachery of his subject.

2. ***Those in commission.*** The task was committed to Ross in i. 2. 64, but it must have been executed by deputy.

5. If the play has been rearranged it may be that this mention of Cawdor's confession originally preceded that in i. 3. 115.

7. Steevens suggested that this fine description of Cawdor's death was inspired by that of the Earl of Essex, the friend of Shakespeare's patron, Lord Southampton, which took place under similar circumstances.

10. ***Owed.*** See Glossary.

11. Throughout this play Shakespeare makes a splendid use of what is known as "tragic irony," which consists in putting into the mouth of a speaker double-edged phrases, of which the hidden meaning is apparent only to the spectators. In the present instance Duncan does not know, but the audience do, that his condemnation of Cawdor is also applicable to Macbeth. The force of this is heightened by the greeting, "O worthiest cousin." Cf. l. 14.

11. ***careless,*** in the sense of "that of which no care is taken;" cf. the use of "sightless" for "invisible" in i. 5. 50 and i. 7. 23; and Abbott, § 3.

There's no art . . . The Clarendon Press editors quote Euripides, *Medea*, 518, "[Why is it that] there is no sign upon the frame of man, whereby one may know the bad?"

20. ***Might have been mine,*** *i. e.* that the recompense I give thee might have been more instead of less than thy deserts.

27. ***Safe toward,*** *i. e.* without running any risk of failing in the love and honor they bear toward you.

30. ***nor.*** Double negatives are common in Elizabethan English; cf. Abbott, § 406.

35. ***drops of sorrow.*** Malone quotes *Winter's Tale*, v. 2. 50, "Their joy waded in tears;" and *Much Ado*, i. 1. 22, "Joy could not show itself modest enough without a badge of bitterness."

The missing half-foot may be naturally supplied by a pause.

42. Duncan's last words are addressed to Macbeth only.

45. Another touch of irony. Duncan does not know what will be the nature of Lady Macbeth's joy.

52. ***wink at,*** *i. e.* shut itself to, pretend not to observe.

58. The scene ends on the ironic note.

This scene may be supposed to take place on the morning of the second day. There is no interval in the breathless speed of the action until the end of act ii, scene 3. In the afternoon Macbeth, and in the evening Duncan, reaches Inverness.

SCENE 5

This scene shows us for the first time that Macbeth's destiny is complicated by his relations to another character. By himself he might not have had the courage to yield to temptation; but Lady Macbeth's influence comes in to confirm him in the path of sin. She is strong where he is weak — in self-conquest, in singleness of will and tenacity of purpose. Superstition and the strain of expectation will make him swerve from his course, but they have no power over her. She is the nobler character of the two; her ambition is for him, not for herself; it is for him that she divests herself of conscience and, so far as may be, even of womanhood.

2. The profound impression made upon Macbeth's superstitious and guilty mind by the witches is shown by the immediate inquiry which he made as to their supernatural powers of knowledge. This can only have taken place during the brief interval between scenes 3 and 4; and it must have been at the same period that he sent the letter to his wife.

6. ***rapt.*** Cf. i. 3. 57, 142.

18. ***the milk of human kindness.*** Mr. Moulton, in his *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist* (vii. 149), suggests a significant interpretation. He would take *human kindness* in the sense of "human nature" and *milk* as suggesting not "absence of hardness" but "natural, inherited, traditional feelings, imbibed at the mother's breast." He adds, "The whole expression of Lady Macbeth, then.

I take to attribute to her husband an instinctive tendency to shrink from whatever is in any way unnatural." Perhaps for "unnatural" one should rather read "abnormal," "unconventional."

21. *illness,* evil nature. The word is generally explained as "wickedness," but I am inclined to think it is rather "discontent," "unwillingness to follow the common herd, and refrain from realizing ambition." It is a quality directly opposed to "humankindness" in Mr. Moulton's sense of "commonplaceness."

24. The Ff have no inverted commas. Pope and others include within them "Thus . . . undone;" but most modern editors end the quotation at "have it." *That* is the murder of Duncan; *it,* the crown.

29. *the golden round, i. e.* the crown. Cf. iv. 1. 87, and *Richard II,* iii. 2. 160 —

"the hollow crown,
That rounds the mortal temples of a king."

30. *metaphysical, i.e.* supernatural. See Glossary.

doth seem to have thee crowned. Lady Macbeth speaks as if Macbeth was already crowned in the eyes of fate.

32. Hunter points out that the last two lines of Lady Macbeth's speech are to cover the sudden exclamation and start of surprise, which might have betrayed her. The announcement of the king's visit breaking in upon her dark soliloquy is highly dramatic.

34. *inform'd, i. e.* given information. For the absolute use of the verb, cf. ii. 1. 48.

36. *had the speed of him, i. e.* outstripped him.

39. *great news.* Another two-edged saying; cf. i. 4. 45.

40. Even the raven, always of ill omen, grows hoarse to croak the unrivalled tragedy that is preparing. It is absurd to say that Lady Macbeth "calls the messenger a raven," but no doubt her pregnant metaphor is suggested by his lack of breath.

41. *spirits.* Lady Macbeth is accustomed to inward communings. She dramatizes them, representing her warring motives as spirits that influence her this way and that.

42. *mortal thoughts, i. e.* thoughts that bring about death; cf. iii. 4. 81; iv. 3. 3.

45. *remorse,* in the wider sense, which includes repentance before the actual commission of sin.

47, 48. *keep peace between The effect and it:* another phrase which it is not easy to analyze precisely. I think it means, "keep peace (*i. e.* avert murder) by interposing between purpose and effect."

50. ***sightless, i. e.*** invisible; cf. i. 7, 23, and i. 4. 11, note.

Lady Macbeth's vivid psychology has led her to a refined form of the same conception of evil powers outside the will and acting upon it, which finds a cruder expression in the belief in witches.

54. ***the blanket of the dark.*** Ingleby quotes a good parallel from Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, where the night is described as "that hideous coverlet of vapours."

55. Lady Macbeth does not greet her husband with the commonplaces of affection. One subject is absorbing them both, and of that alone can they fitly speak.

The horror of the play begins to grow, created with subtle art, by the half-spoken thoughts (l. 61), the euphemisms (l. 68), the significant pauses (l. 62).

59. ***instant, i. e.*** the present. The transition from this sense to that of a brief moment of time is well shown in ii. 3. 97 —

> "from this instant
> There is nothing serious in mortality."

62. Abbott, § 511, suggests that the pause in this line is intentional. Lady Macbeth waits to see the effect of her words.

64. ***the time, i. e.***, according to Delius, "the age we live in." Cf. i. 7. 81. So the whole phrase will mean, "to deceive men you must put on a face in keeping with their temper."

67. The "snake in the grass" was a favorite symbol of flattery with the writers of emblem-books. Shakespeare often uses it. Cf. *Richard II*, iii. 2. 19, and *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 2. 73, "O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!"

68. ***provided for.*** Note the unwillingness to use an ugly word for an ugly thing; and cf. in *Merry Wives*, i. 3. 32, Pistol's "'Convey,' the wise it call. 'Steal!' foh, a fico for the phrase!"

72. Macbeth is still irresolute.

73. ***alter favour,*** is to change countenance.

SCENE 6

The visit of Duncan to Macbeth's castle is one of the three accidents or opportunities which help Macbeth to attain the object of his ambition. Cf. Introduction, p. xx. In this scene the trustful, gentle nature of Duncan is used to emphasize by contrast the horror of the coming murder. The touches of natural description serve a similar purpose.

3. ***gentle.*** Strictly speaking, it is "the air," not "our senses,"

that is *gentle.* Shakespeare often transfers epithets thus from the noun to which they are really appropriate to some other closely connected with it.

4. ***martlet.*** This is Rowe's emendation for the *barlet* of the Ff.

5. ***mansionry.*** The Ff have *mansonry.* The emendation in the text is Theobald's. Pope preferred *masonry.*

6. The line is a foot short as it stands.

9. ***most.*** So Rowe for the *must* of the Ff.

11. Duncan courteously apologizes for rewarding Macbeth's past services by imposing a new one upon him. His affection, he says, only brings trouble on his subjects; yet they must thank God for that trouble, because it *is* due to affection.

16. ***single.*** Cf. i. 3. 140, note.

20. ***hermits,*** *i. e.* we shall ever pray for you, like hermits or bedesmen.

Macbeth is too little master of himself to meet Duncan. He leaves that to the stronger nerves of his wife.

30. These phrases of courtesy often require the action of the stage to illustrate them. We may suppose Duncan at this point to conduct his hostess into the castle.

SCENE 7

Macbeth is not yet resolved. His vivid imagination paints terribly the dangers in his path. Thus oppressed, he leaves the banquet to be alone. It is not moral scruples that torment him, nor even a dread of what lies beyond the grave. It is the thought of the earthly hereafter, the consciousness that evil deeds recoil upon the doer. To him comes Lady Macbeth; in the inevitable clash of the two natures hers proves the stronger; her dauntless will confirms his; her insight into his character enables her to meet him with the most effective arguments. He no longer hesitates, and reëchoes for himself her previous counsel of dissimulation. Here the act naturally closes; the Temptation is complete.

1. There is a subtle double sense of ***done.*** The idea is, "If all were over when the actual deed of murder is done, then there would be no reason in delay."

4. ***his surcease,*** its cessation; ***success*** means what follows — the result.

5. ***the be-all,*** *i. e.* a thing complete in itself, not complicated with consequences.

6. ***bank and shoal,*** *i. e.* the shallows of life as contrasted with the depths of eternity. But *shoal* is only Theobald's emendation for

the *school* of the Ff. If the Ff reading is kept, *bank* must be interpreted as "bench," and the whole phrase taken as introducing the metaphor of ll. 8–10.

But here, only here in this life.

7. Macbeth would take his chance in eternity, were he sure of trammelling up the temporal results of his act.

jump. Cf. *Cymbeline*, v. 4. 188, "jump the after enquiry on your own peril."

8. ***here, i. e.*** on earth.

16. The considerations which might have made Macbeth shrink from the murder, only lead him to quail at the danger of incurring popular hatred.

22. Cf. *Psalm* xviii. 10 —

> "And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly;
> Yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind."

23. ***sightless***, cf. i. 5. 50. The ***couriers of the air*** are of course the winds.

25, 27. There are really two metaphors in these lines, both from horsemanship; that of the spurless rider, and that of the rider not yet mounted, who tries in vain to reach his saddle by vaulting.

The *spur* wanting to Macbeth is the "illness should attend" ambition, the lack of which in him his wife discerned in i. 5. 21.

28. ***the other, i. e.*** the other side. Some critics would put *side* in the text. It is not necessary. The pause fills up the syllable; and the sense is supplied from "the sides of my intent."

31. Macbeth does not confess to his wife the fears that fill his mind; but her own insight into him is sufficient to show her the real causes of his hesitation.

35. Cf. *King John*, iv. 2. 116 —

> "Oh, where hath our intelligence been drunk?
> Where hath it slept?"

37. ***green.*** Cf. Carlyle's famous description of Robespierre (*French Revolution*, iv. 4), "complexion of a multiplex atrabiliar colour, the final shade of which may be the pale sea-green."

39. ***Such, i. e.*** "green and pale."

42. ***the ornament of life, i. e.*** "the golden opinions" of l. 33.

45. ***the adage.*** It is found in Heywood's *Proverbs* (1566), "The cate would eate fishe, and would not wet her feete."

47. ***beast.*** The point is, "If it is not the act of a man to do the deed now, was it one to suggest it before?" This passage is sufficient to prove that the conception of the murder was Macbeth's,

not his wife's. Line 51 shows that the reference can hardly be to scene 5. The matter must have been discussed between them at a point before the action of the play.

49. *I. e.* "You were willing to play the man enough to become a king instead of a subject."

59. Mrs. Jameson says on this line, "Mrs. Siddons adopted successively three different intonations in giving the words '*We fail.*' At first as a quick contemptuous interrogation. Afterwards with the note of admiration and an accent of indignant astonishment, laying the emphasis on 'we.' Lastly, she fixed on what I am convinced is the true reading — *we fail*, with the simple period, modulating her voice to a deep, low, resolute tone, which settled the issue at once — as though she had said 'If we fail, why then we fail, and all is over.' This is consistent with the dark fatalism of the character, and the sense of the line following — and the effect was sublime, almost awful."

I prefer Mrs. Siddons' second interpretation. It is not to Lady Macbeth's purpose to admit the possibility of failure. Fatalism would not gain her point.

60. ***But,*** *i. e.* only.

Steevens suggested that the metaphor of this line was taken from the screwing up of musical instruments to the right pitch.

72. The suggestion of a definite scheme appeals to Macbeth's practical mind. He is in his element now, the element of action.

77. ***other,*** in an adverbial sense, "otherwise."

78. ***As,*** seeing that.

81. Cf. i. 5. 64.

ACT II — SCENE 1

This introductory scene falls into three divisions. In ll. 1–10 the mood of the spectator is prepared for the crime to be done. It is past midnight, black as Macbeth's heart; evil influences are abroad, disquieting even the innocent Banquo.

3. In ii. 3. 22 the Porter says, "Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock," *i. e.* about two o'clock; cf. also v. i. 40.

4. ***husbandry,*** economy. For the metaphor, "heaven's candles," cf. *Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 220, "by these blessed candles of the night;" *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 5. 9, "Night's candles are burnt out," etc.

5. ***that,*** his helmet; perhaps, or a dagger. On the stage the action would explain, and all Shakespeare's plays were written primarily for the stage.

11–30. Duncan's trust and graciousness doubles the guilt of the murder. Lady Macbeth's influence has prevailed; Macbeth's mind is made up. He plays a part with Banquo, professes to "think not of" the witches; yet delicately sounds his friend (l. 25), angling for his support hereafter. Banquo's reply shows that already his suspicions are not unawakened.

14. ***offices.*** Some critics would read *officers;* but I think this is a case of the use of abstract for concrete.

16. ***shut up,*** wrapped in; the use of the participle without "is" is characteristic of the compressed style of the play.

19. ***Which.*** The antecedent is will.

23. ***We,*** you and I. Macbeth is too good an actor to use the kingly "we," as the Clarendon Press editors suggest.

25. Macbeth's words are purposely obscure: "If you will consent to my wishes, when the occasion arises," *i. e.* "If you will support me on the throne."

31–32. Why the bell? When she has drugged the grooms?

31–64. Macbeth is now at bottom resolute, but his nerve will not bear the strain of suspense: he becomes at once a prey to horrible visions. Yet he has, now as always, a gift of aloofness, which enables him by fits and starts to analyse his own circumstances and mental state. He can philosophize verbally, but only so.

41. The line is filled up by a pause, during which Macbeth draws his dagger.

44. Either his eyes, which see the dagger, must be deceived, or his touch, which only meets emptiness. I think the dagger should not be in the air, but on a table; he thinks it real at first; is uncertain when he fails to clutch it; and convinced that it is a vision by the "gouts of blood."

48. ***informs,*** takes visible form.

51. The omitted syllable is but awkwardly replaced by a pause; Davenant's version has *now witchcraft celebrates;* Steevens would read *sleeper.*

52. ***Hecate's offerings,*** the offerings made to Hecate. Hecate, in classical mythology the name of Artemis-Diana, in her aspect as an infernal deity, was regarded in the Middle Ages as the queen of witches. As such she appears in Middleton and elsewhere, as well as in *Hamlet,* iii. 2. 269; *Lear,* i. 1. 112. In Shakespeare's undoubted plays the word is always a dissyllable.

55. ***Tarquin's ravishing strides.*** So Pope for the *sides* of Ff. The phrase has needlessly exercised commentators; but strides may well be "stealthy." Cf. *Lucrece,* 365, "Into her chamber

wickedly he stalks." In *Cymbeline*, ii. 2. 12, Iachimo, like Macbeth, compares himself to Tarquin, as he sets about his crime, "Our Tarquin thus did softly press the rushes."

The epithet *ravishing* is transferred from *Tarquin* to *strides*.

57. ***which way they walk,*** is explanatory of "steps." Cf. *Lear*, i. 1. 272, "I know you what you are;" and Abbott, § 414.

58. A reminiscence of *Luke*, xix. 40.

59. "And prevent the deed of horror from being done at this suitable time."

61. ***gives.*** For the singular verb with a plural subject cf. i. 3. 147, note.

SCENE 2

There is no real need for a change of scene. The action is continuous to the end of scene 3.

The spiritual weakness of Macbeth, the complete unstringing of every fibre, once the deed is done; and, on the other hand, the triumphant self-control of Lady Macbeth, are both at their height in this scene. The murder is not presented, only felt, on the stage. Here again Shakespeare approaches the classical spirit.

1. Lady Macbeth has deliberately wound herself up to the necessary pitch by the use of wine.

2–5. These four lines, as printed in the Ff, do not scan. The very simple rearrangement is due to Rowe.

3. The owl has always been a bird of ill omen since Christianity swept away the worship of Athene, and even before in Rome.

the fatal bellman. Webster, *Duchess of Malfi*, iv. 2—

> "I am the common bellman,
> That usually is sent to condemned persons,
> The night before they suffer."

4. ***He,*** Macbeth.

7. Had she given them opium?

9. ***Enter Macbeth*** is the stage-direction of the Ff. Most modern editors read *Macb.* (*within*). Probably the courtyard had a gallery round it, and into this Macbeth rushes in alarm at a fancied sound. He has already done the murder, and is on his way down. Cf. ll. 15–17.

11. The point is, "to attempt and fail is ruin." The Ff punctuate *the attempt, and not the deed*, giving a wrong sense.

13, 14. Such touches must not be neglected in studying the character of Lady Macbeth. Her remorseless words and deeds do not come from a callous nature, but from a steeled will.

16. The arrangement of the lines is Hunter's, except that he reads *Ay!* for "I." The Ff have —

"*Lady.* I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?
Macb. When?
Lady. Now.
Macb. As I descended?
Lady. I."

19. *Hark!* Macbeth is startled again by an imaginary noise. On the modern stage a clap of thunder vulgarizes the point.

26. *two:* doubtless Malcolm and Donalbain. The picture of the sons, half waking while their father is murdered, adds to the horror of the situation.

33. Lady Macbeth tries to quell her husband's excited imagination by the exercise of common-sense. The thought of sleep leads his over-wrought brain to pile up metaphors upon it.

36–40. These lines are an echo of the numerous sonnets in which the followers of Sidney and Daniel tasked their wits in fanciful changes on the idea of "Care-charmer Sleep."

37. *sleave.* Ff have *sleeve;* but see Glossary, *s. v.*

42. Macbeth, in his frenzy, lingers on the titles that by their fascination have lured him to sin.

55. Cf. Webster, *Vittoria Corombona*, "Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils."

56. Lady Macbeth's grim pun gives a new touch of horror. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, iv. 5. 129, "England shall double gild his treble guilt;" and *Henry V*, ii. chor. 26, "the gilt of France, — O guilt indeed!"

57. The knocking here seems to show that the opening of the next scene always formed part of the play. Macbeth is not sure at first if it is real or "fantastic."

60. Cf. v. 1. 26, &c., and the quotation from Forman's MS. in Appendix A.

63. "Turning the green waves into a sheet of red." The Ff spoil the sense by punctuating, *making the green one, red.*

68. "Your firmness hath deserted you."

70. *nightgown.* See Glossary, *s. v.*

SCENE 3

The episode of the Porter is necessary for two reasons: mechanically, to give Macbeth and Lady Macbeth time to prepare for the approaching discovery; dramatically, to afford an interval of relief

between two scenes of intensely strained emotion. See Introduction, p. xix, and Appendix F. The change of emotional level is marked by the use of prose. But it is grim fooling, in the shadow of murder.

The entry of the lords makes Macbeth himself again, for there is something to be done. He acts consummately, touching just the right notes: the grief of the loving subject, the anger of the generous host. His happy impulse to kill the grooms, and the ill-considered flight of Malcolm and Donalbain, both help to save him from suspicion. Banquo and Duncan's two sons alone see through the deception. On the other hand, Lady Macbeth's turn to give way comes in the very crisis of action. Her fainting is not dissimulation; her nerves will bear no more.

2. ***hell-gate.*** "He never dreams, while imagining himself a porter of hell-gate, how near he comes to the truth." (Bodenstedt.)

old, a frequent "strengthening" epithet, much like "bloody," as vulgarly used. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, iv. 2. 16, "We shall have old swearing;" *Much Ado*, v. 2. 98, "Yonder's old coil at home."

5. Malone quotes Hall, *Satires*, iv. 6 —

> "Each muck-worm will be rich with lawless gain,
> Although he smother up mowes of seven years' grain,
> And hanged himself when corn goes cheap again."

He attempts also to date the play by this and other allusions. The price of corn in the summer and autumn of 1606 was lower than for several years before and after.

6. ***napkins,*** pocket-handkerchiefs. In *As You Like It*, iv. 3, the "napkin" brought by Oliver to Rosalind is also called a "handkercher."

9. ***the other devil's name.*** Is this "the name of Demogorgon," which might not be uttered?

an equivocator: probably an allusion to the doctrine of "equivocation" — Newman's "economy" of truth — taught by the Jesuits; and perhaps in especial to the trial, in March, 1606, of Garnet, Superior of the order in England.

15. "The joke consists in this, that a French hose being very short and straight, a tailor must be master of his trade who could steal anything from thence." (Warburton.) The Clarendon Press editors quote Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses*, where two kinds of French hose are described, one loose, one very tight.

20. ***the primrose way:*** cf. *Hamlet*, i. 3. 50, "the primrose path of dalliance;" and *All's Well*, iv. 5. 56, "the flowery way, that leads to the broad gate and the great fire."

27. ***the second cock:*** about two in the morning; cf. v. 1. 34. But if the murder was so early, how can it now be already "so late," and time for Macduff to visit Duncan? Holinshed puts the murder of King Duffe near daybreak, "a little before cocks crow."

56. ***limited,*** appointed; cf. *Richard III*, v. 3. 25, "limit each leader to his several charge."

59–66. All nature is perturbed by the tragedy of the night. On Shakespeare's use of the "pathetic fallacy," see Introduction, p. xx.

63. ***combustion,*** tumult (Cotgrave's *Dictionary*). So used in *Henry VIII*, v. 4. 51, and Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vi. 225.

64. ***the obscure bird,*** the owl, which delights in darkness. Cf. ii. 2. 3, 16.

69. Double negatives, for emphasis, are common in Shakespeare. See Abbott, § 406.

73. Note the confusion of metaphors in ***anointed temple.***

77. The sight of the Gorgons, Medusa and her sisters, turned men to stone. Shakespeare alludes again to them in *Antony and Cleopatra*, ii. 5. 116. He may have read of them in Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, v. 189.

81. ***sleep, death's counterfeit.*** So *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2. 364, "death-counterfeiting sleep," and *Lucrece*, 402, "(sleep), the map of death."

83. ***The great doom's image.*** Cf. *Lear*, v. 3. 264, "Is this the promised end—or image of that horror?"

101. ***this vault.*** Life is compared to an empty cellar, from which all the wine has been drawn. For the metaphor cf. the phrase in Tennyson's *Ulysses*, "I have drunk Life to the lees."

117. ***pauser,*** that which makes to pause. "*-er* is sometimes appended to a *noun* for the purpose of signifying an agent." (Abbott, § 443.)

118. ***laced,*** covered with little wavy patterns. Critics have objected, some to the far-fetched metaphor, some to the dwelling upon horrors in this speech. Johnson thought that it was designed "to show the difference between the studied language of hypocrisy and the natural outcries of sudden passion."

golden, a common Elizabethan color-epithet of blood. Presumably the color of blood has not changed much, so their gold must have been redder in tint than ours. Perhaps an idea of richness rather than color. See the puns in ii. 2. 56, note.

122. ***breech'd,*** covered as with breeches. The queer metaphor is no doubt suggested by the phrase "naked daggers." Johnson suggested *Unmanly drenched.*

126. *argument,* subject for discussion.

128. *an auger-hole.* Critics interpret this, "an obscure or minute hole;" but surely it means a hole made with a sharp point, as of an auger — or a dagger. Cf. l. 123. Donalbain naturally fears his father's fate for himself and his brother.

130. *brew'd.* The phrase suggests deliberate manufacture. Macbeth's hypocrisy is quite apparent to the two princes.

131. "As yet we can only feel grief; we have not reached the point where attempt at revenge can be set on foot."

137. *pretence,* aim, intention, design. Cf. i. 3. 121. Banquo's suspicions of Macbeth are renewed; he sees that this is no mere murder by grooms; it is the outcome of some treasonous secret plot.

141. *them.* The princes regard Banquo and Macduff as being, very possibly, as false as Macbeth. Cf. the interview between Malcolm and Macduff in act iv, scene 3.

143. *easy.* Elizabethan syntax uses many adjectives as adverbs. See Abbott, § 1.

146. *the near,* the nearer. *Near* is an old comparative of *nigh*, *nearer* being really a double comparative. Macbeth was Duncan's cousin, according to Holinshed.

151. *warrant,* justification.

The action has been almost continuous since act i, scene 4, covering a single day and night. The next scene takes place late on the day after the murder.

SCENE 4

Macbeth's first crime has been successful; his acting and the flight of the princes have saved him from detection. As Duncan's cousin and a great captain he succeeds naturally to the vacant throne. If Macduff or Banquo have their suspicions, the time to publish them is not yet. This scene gives relief and perspective to the action, by presenting it from an outside point of view, that of the Scottish subject.

4. *trifled,* turned to trifles. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, iv. 1. 298, "We trifle time." Elizabethan writers use almost any noun or adjective as a verb, at pleasure. See Abbott, § 290.

7. *the travelling lamp,* the sun; the epithet is applied to him by both Drayton and Cowley. F 1, F 2 read *travailing;* F 2, F 3, *travelling;* but the spelling of the two words was hardly discriminated in the 17th century.

9, 10. The rare occurrence of eclipses has made them objects of superstitious dread in many nations.

12. *towering,* a technical term of falconry. Cf. Donne, *Letter to Sir H. Goodyere* —

> "Which when herself she lessens in the air,
> You then first say, that high enough she towers."

13. Both the "mousing owl" and the rebellious horses symbolize the disloyalty of Macbeth to his king. In the weird atmosphere of this play signs and omens do not appear out of place.

15. *minions,* those most highly prized. See Glossary, *s. v.*

21. Macduff is in a mood of universal suspicion. He will not confide in Ross, a mere facile courtier; but answers him ambiguously. Yet he will by no means stay at the new king's court.

24. *pretend;* "put forward as a reason or excuse." (New Eng. Dict.)

27. *still.* Ross reverts to the thought of the unnatural marvels just recounted.

29. Note the octosyllable line, and cf. Appendix H, § 5 (ii).

31. *Scone,* a city, now ruined, two miles north of Perth. It was the capital of the Pictish kings, and the coronation place of the kings of Scotland. The famous stone, on which the rite was performed, has been, since 1296, in Westminster Abbey.

33. *Colmekill,* the "kill" or "cell" of St. Columba, or Colim M'Felim M'Fergus, the converter of Scotland. It is the same as Iona, one of the Western Isles, and was the usual burying-place of the kings of Scotland.

36. *thither, i. e.* to Scone.

40, 41. The old man rightly judges Ross as a mere time-server.

An interval of some weeks follows this scene. In the next, Macbeth is firmly established on the throne, and has had time to hear that Malcolm and Donalbain are in England and Ireland respectively.

ACT III — SCENE 1

The First Crime is hardly over before it leads to the Second. Macbeth cannot feel secure while Banquo lives; his Genius is rebuked under him; no show of honors can win his affection; he remains courteous, cold, and silent. Nor can Macbeth forget that word in the prophecy of the weird sisters about the succession of Banquo's house to the throne.

1. Banquo's speech leaves no doubt on his view of Macbeth; it shows too, that in his mind, as in the king's, the promise of the witches is unforgotten.

7. *shine,* prove conspicuously true.

13. ***all-thing,*** as a variant for *altogether*, does not occur elsewhere in Shakespeare.

16. ***Command upon*** is an unusual phrase for "lay your command upon;" but there is no need to read, "Set your highness' command upon me" (Mason), or "Let your highness' command be upon me." (Keightley.)

the which, is common in Shakespeare: cf. the French *lequel*, and Abbott, § 270.

26. ***supper,*** *i. e.* seven o'clock; cf. l. 42.

the better, because he had to go far.

43. ***the sweeter*** = an adverb, "more sweetly;" cf. ii. 3. 143.

44. ***while*** is used for "until" where the action extends continuously over the intervening time. Cf. Abbott, § 137.

The formula ***God be with you*** may be scanned as a dissyllable — our "Good-bye."

48. ***thus,*** on the throne.

52. ***to,*** in addition to. Cf. Abbott, § 185.

56, 57. This passage is explained by *Antony and Cleopatra*, ii. 3. 18 —

> "Therefore, O Antony, stay not by his side:
> Thy demon, that 's thy spirit which keeps thee, is
> Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,
> Where Cæsar's is not; but, near him, thy angel
> Becomes a fear, as being o'er-powered."

Shakespeare borrowed the idea from North's *Plutarch* (*Life of Antony* [1631], p. 926).

56. ***Genius,*** in the Elizabethan sense, is a tutelar spirit; but perhaps we find it here in a stage of transition to the modern use. Macbeth means that what we should call his "temperament," his "personality," quails before that of Banquo.

64. There is no son of Macbeth in the play; but cf. iv. 3. 216, note, and Introduction, p. xi.

65. ***filed,*** *i. e.* defiled. The Elizabethans constantly drop such affixes. Cf. Abbott, § 460.

68. ***mine eternal jewel,*** *i. e.* mine immortal soul. Cf. *Richard II*, i. 1. 180 —

> "A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest
> Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast."

72. ***champion,*** *i. e.* as a champion in single combat.

to the utterance; the French *à l'outrance*. See Glossary, *s. v.*

The murderers are former victims of Macbeth's own, whom he has now induced to believe that they owe their wrongs to Banquo. Here again Macbeth's histrionic skill, his power of playing upon the emotions of others, comes out. This passage is sufficient to show that Macbeth was not perfectly innocent and noble before the witches tempted him.

80. ***pass'd in probation,*** proved, passing them one by one.

81. ***borne in hand,*** handled, treated. Cf. *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 65—.

> "grieved
> That so his sickness, age and impotence
> Was falsely borne in hand."

88. ***gospell'd,*** filled with the spirit of gospel teaching. See *Matthew*, v. 4, on forgiveness of injuries.

91. ***yours,*** your family.

95. ***the valued file,*** the list or scale of values. So Donne has "the plaguey bill" for "the bill of the plague." Singer states that such a catalogue of dogs occurs in Fleming's *Junius' Nomenclator*.

97. ***housekeeper,*** watch-dog, so called in Topsell's *History of Beasts* (1658).

100. ***Particular addition,*** a particular epithet or qualification.

103. Scan — "Nót in | the wórst | ránk of | mánhood | sáy it."

104, 105. "I will suggest to you a means for getting rid of your enemy, and making a friend of one, to whom also he is dangerous."

112. ***tugg'd with.*** "With" is often used for "by." Abbott, § 193.

116. ***in such bloody distance,*** standing near enough to draw blood.

118. ***my near'st of life,*** the nearest parts to my life, the most vital parts. Cf. v. 2. 11.

121. ***For,*** on account of.

122. ***loves.*** We should say "love;" but cf. v. 8. 61, and iii. 2. 53, "preys."

123. ***Who,*** for "whom." Cf. iii. 4. 42, and Abbott, § 274.

130. Johnson proposes *a perfect spy o' the time*, and makes the line a reference to the third murderer of scene 3. But I think it only means "acquaint you with the knowledge, or espial, of the perfect time to act." For the transference of the epithet cf. ii. 1. 55.

132. ***something from,*** at some distance from.

"Keep in mind that I must remain absolutely clear from suspicion." For the absolute use of the participle cf. Abbott, § 378.

SCENE 2

From the moment of her sin, remorse begins to lay hold upon Lady Macbeth. She conceals it in Macbeth's presence, thinking to strengthen him, as of old; but the two lives are insensibly drifting asunder. Macbeth addresses her in terms of grim love, but he no longer takes her counsel on his schemes, and only half imparts them to her, even at the last moment. As for Macbeth himself, directly there is nothing to be done, he becomes morbid, brooding over his crimes past and future, and playing about them with lurid words.

1. Banquo is in Lady Macbeth's mind too, and l. 38 shows that she has at least contemplated his death.

4–7. Hunter thinks that these lines are spoken by Macbeth, his "sorriest fancies." But they are wanted for Lady Macbeth, to connect the woman of act ii with the woman of act v.

11. ***all.*** We should say "any." Cf. *Sonnet* lxxiv, "without all bail." Holinshed has, "They were slain without all mercy;" and Ascham, "Without all reason." Abbott, § 12. But *without* may here be equivalent to "outside." Abbott, § 197.

13. ***scotch'd.*** This is Theobald's emendation for the *scorched* of Ff. See Glossary.

14. ***She'll close.*** The severed parts will unite again.

16. Macbeth's fears have not quelled him yet. He is able to throw out a titanic defiance to heaven.

This line has thirteen syllables, which is quite unusual. Perhaps there has been mutilation; and *disjoint*, in the only other place where Shakespeare uses it (*Hamlet*, i. 2. 20), is a participle and not a verb. We might borrow two separate emendations and read —

> "But let the frame of things become disjoint,
> Both the worlds suffer dissolution."

16. ***both the worlds;*** not "now" and "hereafter," as in *Hamlet*, iv. 5. 134; but "heaven" and "earth."

19. Cf. l. 6.

20. ***to gain our peace.*** So F 1; but the other Ff and most editors read, *to gain our place*. The F 1 reading is supported by *Richard II*, iii. 2. 127 —

> "*Rich.* I warrant they have made peace with Bolingbroke.
> *Scroop.* Peace have they made with him indeed, my lord."

23. ***fitful,*** intermittent.

24. ***his*** is the almost invariable genitive of "it" in Shakespeare. Cf. Abbott, § 228.

27. ***Gentle my lord.*** The position of the adjective is due to the fact that "my lord" became practically one word, like the French *milord*.

30. ***apply to,*** busy itself with.

31. No doubt the policy of courting Banquo, pursued in scene 1, and as early as act ii, scene 1, had been originally agreed on between the pair.

32. There has probably been some mutilation here. As the line stands, the adjective is used absolutely, as a participle is in iii. 1. 131.

38. Lady Macbeth's thoughts have jumped with her husband's, and he no longer hesitates to break his new enterprise to her.

nature's copy's not eterne. I think *copy* is used in the sense of "copyhold," a tenure which is not permanent. Such tenures were generally held for so many lives, which gives an oldest meaning here. Cf. l. 49, "that great bond."

41. ***cloister'd.*** A happy epithet for the flight of a bat backwards and forwards within a limited space.

Hecate. Here only as goddess of night; cf. ii. 1. 52, note, and note the difference of epithet. There she was "pale," here "black."

42. ***shard-borne.*** So F 1, F 2. F 3, F 4 have *shard-born;* but such a divergence of spelling proves very little. *Shard-borne*, borne on shards of scaly wing-cases. So in *Cymbeline*, iii. 3. 20, "the sharded beetle." *Shard* is (1) "a wing-case," as in *Antony and Cleopatra*, iii. 2. 20, "They are his shards and he their beetle;" (2) "a fragment of pottery," as in *Hamlet*, v. 1. 254, "Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her." But see the New Eng. Dict. for another, less poetical, explanation. See Glossary, *s. v.*

44. ***note*** combines the senses of "eminence" and "infamy." See Glossary, *s. v.*

49. ***that great bond,*** the bond between destiny and the house of Banquo, made known in the prophecy of the weird sisters.

50. ***Light thickens.*** A curious phrase; we should say "darkness thickens;" but Shakespeare appears to regard darkness as produced by the thickening of light. Cf. Spenser, *Shepheards Calender*, "But see, the welkin thicks apace;" and Fletcher, *Faithful Shepherdess*, "Fold your flocks up, for the air 'Gins to thicken."

51. A ***rooky wood:*** a wood frequented by rooks.

53. ***preys.*** Cf. iii. 1. 122, note.

56. ***go with me,*** consent to my design. Cf. *Lear*, i. 1. 107, "But goes thy heart with this?" But the phrase may be a mere exit note, or so used by the mutilator.

SCENE 3

This scene, in which the Second Crime is accomplished, is the crisis of the play. The escape of Fleance is Macbeth's first check, and from it dates his ruin. Henceforth the irony of the play is against him, and the supernatural powers, which it indicates, slowly work out his punishment.

It is a possible theory that the mysterious Third Murderer is Macbeth himself. Always a man of action, it would not be unnatural for him to ensure the complete accomplishment of his design by himself taking a secret part in it. But cf. the note on iii. 4. 17.

4. ***To,*** in accordance with; cf. Abbott, § 187.

6. ***lated.*** For the dropping of the prefix cf. Abbott, § 460.

10. ***the note of expectation,*** the list of expected guests. See Glossary, *s. v. note.*

12. An ingenious device to avoid the introduction of horses, which could hardly have been made effective with the poor scenic provision of the Elizabethan stage.

SCENE 4

The effect of Macbeth's crimes is visible in the degeneration of his powers of mind. Formerly he was startled by the "air-drawn dagger," but was able to throw off his weakness. Now the apparition of Banquo masters him with superstitious fears; even the dread of detection cannot restrain him from yielding to them, and the potent influence which his wife had over his will is now sensibly weakened.

1, 2. ***at first And last,*** from beginning to end of the feast; but Johnson preferred *To first and last, i. e.* to those of all degrees.

5. ***keeps her state,*** remains seated in her chair of state; cf. Glossary, *s. v. state.*

6. ***require,*** claim.

14. The Clarendon Press editors explain this line as referring to the blood, "It is better outside thee than inside him." Confusion of the cases of pronouns is common in Shakespeare; cf. v. 8. 35.

17. It must be admitted that Macbeth's apparent ignorance of Fleance's escape, as well as the "Thou canst not say I did it" of

l. 50 rather go against the theory that he is himself present in scene 3. Here, however, he may be merely pretending ignorance.

21. *my fit.* Macbeth has become subject to suspicion, the disease of tyrants. While Banquo, Fleance, Macduff live he is a prey to constant fits of terror.

25. *safe:* a grimly euphemistic phrase.

27. *twenty trenched gashes.* Cf. the "twenty mortal murders" of l. 81.

32. *ourselves,* either the so-called "plural of majesty," or used reciprocally for "each other," in which case the comma should be omitted.

36. *From thence,* when away from home.

ceremony. *Cere* is a monosyllable; cf. *Julius Cæsar*, i. 1. 70, "If you do find them decked with ceremonies." "Cerement" is similarly used as a dissyllable.

39. There is a curious division of opinion among critics as to whether, upon the stage, the ghost of Banquo should visibly appear, or whether, as in the case of the "air-drawn dagger," its presence should be intimated to the audience by the gestures and words of the actor. If the first theory is adopted it is difficult to preserve the illusion that only Macbeth of all the company, perceives the ghost. On the other hand, the stage-direction here, and the description given by Forman (Appendix A) seem decisive as to the Elizabethan practice; and the stage tradition still preserves it. In the two great parallel passages, *Hamlet*, act i, and *Julius Cæsar*, act iv, scene 3, the difficulty does not arise. In *Hamlet* the ghost is visible to all the actors in the scene; in *Julius Cæsar* they are all asleep except Brutus.

41. Notice how the irony of these hypocritical lines is really turned against the speaker.

graced, either "honored," "favored," or "full of grace," as in *Lear*, i. 4. 267, "Like a graced palace."

42. *Who,* for "whom;" cf. iii. 1. 122.

45. As Ross speaks, Macbeth turns to his seat and finds it full. He starts back, and looks round, to the surprise of the guests, who see only an empty chair. At first (l. 49) he thinks it is an unseemly practical joke; then the truth breaks upon him, and in a low, broken voice he addresses the ghost (l. 50).

50. Cf. note on l. 17.

53. Lady Macbeth, who knows but vaguely the cause of Banquo's absence, has sat in silence since the beginning of the scene, watching her husband's demeanor. She cannot see the

ghost, but Macbeth's disturbance has not escaped her. Making an excuse to the guests, she draws him aside, and attempts, as of old, to steel his spirit with her own. But he has almost passed out of the sphere of her power.

57. ***shall,*** often used by Elizabethans in the sense of "are sure to." Cf. iv. 3. 47, and Abbott, § 315.

extend his passion, prolong his suffering. *Passion* is used in its wider sense of any strong emotion.

60. ***proper stuff,*** mere, absolute nonsense. Cf. Glossary, *s. v. proper.*

65. Cf. *Richard II*, v. 1. 40 —

> "In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire
> With good old folks and let them tell thee tales
> Of woeful ages long ago betid;"

and *Winter's Tale*, ii. 1. 25 —

> "A sad tale 's best for winter; I have one
> Of sprites and goblins."

69. There is a struggle in Macbeth's mind between superstition and the new strength which his wife's common-sense gives him.

75. Macbeth has a trick of general philosophical reflection, which is characteristic of Shakespeare's heroes at this period of his development. *Hamlet* is full of it.

76. ***humane.*** So the Ff spell; but as "human" and "humane" were not then distinguished, as now, by spelling, we are at liberty to understand either shade of meaning.

gentle weal. So Ff. Warburton proposed *general weal* = "common-weal." If *gentle* is right it is used proleptically — "purged it into gentleness." Cf. *Richard II*, ii. 3. 94, "Frighting her *pale-faced* villages with war."

81. Cf. l. 27.

mortal, deadly; cf. iv. 3. 3, and Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i. 1 —

> "Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world and all our woe."

86. Cf. l. 53. Doubtless this explanation had been agreed upon between husband and wife for any such emergency.

90. Macbeth is sufficiently recovered to be defiant; and, as before, the moment his thoughts turn to Banquo the vision appears. It has been suggested that there are two ghosts in the scene, and that one of them — either the first or second — is that of Duncan.

But the theory is both fanciful and untrue to psychology. For the ghosts are after all the figments of Macbeth's imagination, and that is naturally wholly occupied with the more recent crime.

92. ***all to all,*** a drinking formula: "all good wishes to you all." Cf. *Timon of Athens*, i. 2. 234, "All to you;" and *Henry VIII*, i. 4. 38, "To you all, good health."

95. ***no speculation,*** no light of intellect. There may be a reminiscence of *Psalm* cv, "Eyes have they, but they see not."

101. ***the Hyrcan tiger.*** There is mention of both "Hyrcan tigers" and "the rhinoceros" on opposite pages of Philemon Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History* (1601, bk. viii. c. 18). Hyrcania is a somewhat vague term for the district south of the Caspian. Daniel in his *Sonnets* (1594) has —

> "restore thy fierce and cruel mind
> To Hyrcan tigers and to ruthless bears."

104. ***to the desert,*** where we should be man to man; cf. *Richard II*, iv. 1. 74, "I dare meet Surrey in a wilderness."

105. ***inhabit.*** So F 1. *Inhabit* is simply "remain," "stay where I am."

106. ***the baby of a girl,*** a girl's doll.

110. ***admired,*** admirable, in the sense of "something to admire" or "wonder at." The use of a positive for an hypothetical verbal adjective is common in Shakespeare: so "unavoided" for "unavoidable" in *Richard II*, ii. 1. 268, and *Richard III*, iv. 4. 217, and "unvalued" for "invaluable" in *Richard III*, i. 4. 27. Cf. Abbott, § 375.

111. ***overcome,*** in a somewhat literal sense, as we say "overshadow." The point of the comparison lies in the unexpectedness with which a cloud in summer darkens the fields and then passes off again.

112–114. "I do not understand my own state of mind, when I see you so unaffected by what has moved me."

122. Macbeth's vague dread resolves itself into a definite fear of discovery, through some unnoticed and unlikely means. And his suspicions, so awakened, fix themselves on Macduff. Already the Second Crime is leading to the Third, as it was itself led to by the First.

123. ***Stones.*** Mr. Paton refers this to the "rocking-stones" or "Clacha breath," by which the Druids tested guilt. It was supposed that only the innocent could shake them. There is one near Glamis Castle.

124. *understood relations, i. e.* the secret mystical relations between things, which soothsayers alone understand, such as the relations between character and the lines on a palm, or between a pack of cards and a murder.

127. *at odds with,* disputing with.

128. *How say'st thou,* as we should say, "What do you make of this?" Line 130 shows that it was not Lady Macbeth who told Macbeth of the refusal.

131. Macbeth's suspicions and his guilty conscience have led him to use all the devices of the tyrant — treachery as well as blood.

not a one. So the Ff. Theobald conjectured *not a Thane.*

136–137. *in . . . in.* A preposition is often repeated for the sake of clearness; cf. Abbott, § 407.

141. *the season,* that which preserves, gives freshness to.

142. Macbeth means by his "self-abuse" the abnormal condition of his "self," which makes him such a slave to superstition and fear. He goes on to say, "Such fear only attends the beginning of a career of crime before custom has hardened the conscience."

The action of the last four scenes has been continuous, occupying the afternoon and night of a single day. In l. 132 Macbeth fixes a visit to the witches for "to-morrow." Therefore scene 5 may be regarded as synchronous with scene 4, while act iv, scene 1 comes on the next morning. For the difficulty in the time of scene 6, see the notes upon it.

SCENE 5

I believe that this scene is one of the additions made to the original play by Middleton or some other interpolator. See Introduction, pp. v–vi. The weird and gloomy atmosphere which hangs about Shakespeare's witches is gone; it is replaced by such prettinesses as that of ll. 23, 24. Hecate, an entirely new and unnecessary character, is introduced. The metre is essentially iambic, and not, as with Shakespeare, trochaic.

1. *Hecate* is in classical myth Artemis or Diana in her aspect as an infernal deity. In the superstitions of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance she became the Queen of Witches, just as Diana, under the name of Titania, became the Queen of Fairies. This belief is very old. Apuleius indeed (*De Asino Aureo*) gives the Queen of Witches the name Caupona; but Scot (*Discoverie of Witchcraft*, iii. 16; cf. also xii. 3) quotes a decree of the fourth century Council of Ancyra, condemning the profession of witches "that in the

night times they ride abroad with Diana, the goddess of the Pagans, or else with Herodias." The decrees of this Council are, however, suspected to be spurious. In Jonson's *Sad Shepherd*, act ii, scene 3, Maudlin, the witch, says —

> "our dame Hecate
> Made it her gaing-night over the kirkyard."

Cf. also note on ii. 1. 52.

angerly, a rare form of the adverb, found also in *Two Gentlemen*, i. 2. 62, and in *King John*, iv. 1. 82.

11. This looks like a reminiscence of the ungrateful son of Hecate in Middleton's *Witch*.

15. ***Acheron,*** a river in Hades.

24. ***profound,*** "with deep or hidden qualities." (Johnson.) The nearest parallel is *As You Like It*, v. 2. 67, "a magician, most profound in his art, and yet not damnable."

32. ***security,*** the consciousness of security, whether true or false. It is the sense of the Latin *securus*. Cf. Webster, *Duchess of Malfi*, v. 2 —

> "Security some men call the suburbs of hell,
> Only a dead wall between."

34. ***Come away, come away.*** This song occurs in act iii, scene 3 of Middleton's *Witch*, and was inserted with some variations in the 1673 edition of this play. Cf. Appendix B.

SCENE 6

As in the last scene of act ii, so here we get a side light upon the story; the outside point of view is represented by the lords, who fulfil the function of the chorus in a Greek drama. Macbeth's conduct has awaked suspicion; his tyranny has made him detested, and already there are hints of the coming retribution.

Another Lord. Johnson suggested that this direction of the Ff might be a mistake for *An. i. e. Angus.* Dyce found *Ross* inserted in his copy of the Folio.

1. All the first part of Lennox's speech is consciously ironical, as the "tyrant" in l. 22 shows.

3. ***borne,*** not, I think, "suffered" by the subjects, but "carried out" by the king; cf. l. 17.

4. ***Marry.*** A common exclamation, from the name of the Virgin.

8. ***Who cannot want the thought.*** There seems to be a superfluous negative here. The sense is clearly, "Who wants, *i. e.* is

without the thought?" Several attempts have been made to alter the text, but probably the phrase is only an instance of the Elizabethan double negative. Cf. Abbott, § 406.

21. ***from,*** on account of.

27. ***Of*** is used often to express the agent where we should use "by." Cf. Abbott, § 170.

29. ***his,*** that which is paid to him.

35. The natural order is curiously inverted.

36. ***free,*** without slavery.

38. Many verbs ending in *-te*, *-t*, and *-d*, do not in Shakespeare add *-ed* in forming their participle. (Abbott, § 342.) Thus *1 Henry IV*, v. 1. 72, "These things indeed you have *articulate*;" and *Hamlet*, iii. 1. 163, "And I, of ladies most *deject* and wretched."

their. So Ff. Most editors accept Hanmer's *the*, but *their* is perhaps needed to distinguish Macbeth from Edward.

40. ***with,*** receiving.

41. ***cloudy,*** gloomy, sullen; or as Delius says, "foreboding, ominous."

me, the ethic dative, as in the stock example, "knock me on this door." It is often used for emphasis, as one might claim attention by raising a forefinger.

42. ***as who should say.*** The phrase is subjunctive, introducing a simile. See Abbott, § 257, and cf. *Merchant of Venice*, i. 2. 50, "He doth nothing but frown, as who should say, 'If you will not have me, choose.'"

43. ***clogs,*** burdens.

49. ***Under a hand accursed,*** depends upon "suffering."

There is a little difficulty as to the time occupied by this scene: iii. 4. 132 shows that iii. 4 and iv. 1 are on successive days; and at least part of iv. 1 must have belonged to the original play. Yet if iii. 4. 130 be compared with iii. 6. 40, a considerable interval will seem to be required between the two scenes.

ACT IV—SCENE 1

Just as the witches symbolized Macbeth's entrance on the path of crime, so now their sinister presence is prophetic of his punishment. By evil suggestions and ambiguous sayings they inspire in him a false confidence, and lure him on to ruin. The interpolations in this scene are insignificant and easily to be distinguished; the loathsome spells and devilish incantations of the Shakespearian part of it are in harmony with the uncanny note of the whole play. Yet in the

elaborate vision which is conjured up for Macbeth, we see a concession to the love for masks and pageants of the Jacobean court.

1. ***the brinded cat;*** the "Graymalkin" of i. 1. 8, the familiar of the First Witch. Probably it is on account of the cat's stealthy and nocturnal ways that it plays so great a part in sorcery.

2. Odd numbers were magical. The Ff read *Thrice, and once*, not *Thrice and once* (*i. e.* four times); so I conceive that *thrice* is merely a repetition of the same word in the preceding line.

hedge-pig. In i. 1. 9 the familiar of the Second Witch is a toad; but the hedgehog or "urchin" is also a creature of ill-omen. Prospero uses it to vex Caliban (*The Tempest*, ii. 2. 5, 10).

3. ***Harpier,*** presumably the familiar of the Third Witch. The word may be a reminiscence of "harpy" or, as Mr. Paton suggests, of the "harper" crab.

5. Witches seem to have attempted to impress the imagination of the ignorant by the use of quaint and nasty ingredients for their charms. Cf. Scot's *Witchcraft*, and Middleton's *Witch*, *passim*.

6. ***cold;*** apparently to be scanned as equivalent to a dissyllable, "co-old;" cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii. 1. 7, "Swifter than the moon's sphere." But Rowe and many others read *Under the cold stone*, Steevens *under coldest stone*, Keightley *underneath cold stone*, &c.

8. Hunter quotes a paper in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1826, to show that the toad has venom diffused under its skin.

16. Of course a blind-worm has no sting.

23. ***Witches' mummy.*** Mummy was a common drug, but if it was really efficacious it was probably due to the spices used in embalming. Cf. Sir T. Browne, *On Urn-burial*, "The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyses or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth. Mummie is become merchandise, Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams." And in his *Fragment on Mummies*, "The common opinion of the virtues of mummy bred great consumption thereof, and princes and great men contended for this strange panacea, wherein the Jews dealt largely, manufacturing mummies from dead carcases and giving them the names of kings, while specifics were compounded from crosses and gibbet-leavings."

27. The yew is not only poisonous, but also grows freely in churchyards.

28. ***in the moon's eclipse.*** Cf. l. 25, "digg'd i' the dark." It is obvious that darkness is proper for the enterprises of witches. "They love darkness ... because their deeds are evil." And especially suitable is the mysterious darkness due to eclipses, to

which unscientific eyes have always attributed a supernatural and ominous character. Cf. *Hamlet*, i. 1. 114—

> "A little ere the mightiest Julius fell . . .
> . . . . . the moist star
> Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
> Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse."

See also l. 138, note.

30. "It is observable that Shakespeare, on this great occasion, which involves the fate of a king, multiplies all the circumstances of horror. The babe, whose finger is used, must be strangled in its birth; the grease must not only be human, but must have dropped from a gibbet, the gibbet of a murderer; and even the sow, whose blood is used, must have offended nature by devouring her own farrow. These are touches of judgment and genius." (Johnson.)

39–43. These lines are in the style of act iii, scene 5, and should, I think, be regarded as an interpolation. They are marked by the appearance of Hecate, by a change from trochaic to iambic metre, and by a song found in full in Middleton's *Witch*.

Enter Hecate to the other three Witches. This is the stage-direction adopted by the Cambridge editors. The Ff read *and the other three Witches*, but the other three witches are already on the stage. Probably it is a mistake of the interpolator's. It is most unlikely that Shakespeare meant to introduce six witches, but possible that the interpolator did so for the sake of his dance. Mr. Fleay has a fantastic theory, which is discussed in Appendix E. He has, I think, been confused by the interpolator. If the passages bracketed in the text are disregarded there are no real inconsistencies of tone left between the remaining scenes.

43. *Black spirits,* &c. For the rest of the song indicated here see Appendix B. It occurs also in Middleton's *Witch*, act v, scene 2. Dr. Brinsley Nicholson points out a passage in the *Discourse of Devils and Spirits*, ch. xxxiii, appended to Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), which gives the origin of this song. Scot speaks of "Brian Darcie's he spirits and she spirits, Tittie and Tiffin, Suckin and Pidgin, Liard and Robin, &c.; his white spirits and black spirits, gray spirits and red spirits." The reference is to a tract by "W. W." [Brian Darcey] on the Witches at St. Osee's, Essex, in which the names and colors of the familiars spoken of are always carefully given.

44. It is a common superstition that sudden bodily pains are ominous of evil.

55. *bladed corn,* grain when the ear is still green and enclosed in

the blade. This is less likely to be "lodged" than fully ripened grain, which is heavy in the ear, and so a more terrible storm would be needed to lay it flat.

59. ***nature's germens,*** *i. e.* the seeds or elements of which all nature is compounded. So the whole phrase means "until the order of nature is dissolved in chaos."

60. ***sicken,*** *i. e.* with satiety. Destruction is personified. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, i. 1. 2 —

> "Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
> The appetite may sicken, and so die."

65. ***nine,*** a mysterious number; cf. i. 3. 36, note.

sweaten, an irregularly formed participle. See Abbott, § 344, and cf. *Merchant of Venice*, iv. i. 77, "When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven."

68. "The armed head represents symbolically Macbeth's head cut off and brought to Malcolm by Macduff. The bloody child is Macduff untimely ripped from his mother's womb. The child with a crown on his head and a bough in his hand is the royal Malcolm, who ordered his soldiers to hew them down a bough, and bear it before them to Dunsinane." (Upton.)

78. "Listening with all one's ears" is a common expression of the same nature as this.

84. ***take a bond,*** *i. e.* make the promise of fate an irrevocable one.

88. Cf. i. 5. 29, note. ***round and top,*** not merely an allusion to the shape and position of a crown, but also, as Grant White points out, because "the crown not only completes and rounds, as with the perfection of a circle, the claim to sovereignty, but it is figuratively the top, the summit, of ambitious hopes." Shakespeare often uses "top" in this sense — *e. g.* "the top of admiration," "the top of judgment," "the top of honor," "the top of happy hours."

93. Birnam is a hill near Dunkeld, 12 miles from Dunsinane, or Dunsinnan, which is seven miles from Perth.

Dunsínane. Elsewhere in the play Shakespeare accents *Dunsinane.* Both accents are also found in Wyntown's *Cronykill.*

95. ***impress,*** force into his service.

97. ***Rebellion's head.*** The Ff have *rebellious dead.* The modern reading is Theobald's, and I think the allusion to the apparition of an armed head justifies it. The suggested *Rebellious head* is a possible alternative.

98. ***our.*** Some editors would read *your;* but I think the word signifies "Macbeth, who is dear to Fate, as well as himself."

100. *mortal custom,* the custom which all men must submit to, — that of dying.

106. *noise.* The term is generally used for music by Elizabethan writers.

116. *Start, eyes, i. e.* from your sockets, that I may behold no longer.

117. *the crack of doom, i. e.* the thunder-peal that announces the Last Judgment. Cf. i. 2. 37, note.

119. A mirror was a common mode of divination. Cf. Spenser, *Faerie Queene,* iii. 2, and the "virtuous glass" of Cambuscan in Chaucer's *Squire's Tale.*

121. "This was intended as a compliment to King James the First, who first united the two islands and three kingdoms under one head; whose house also was said to be descended from Banquo." (Warburton.) See Introduction, p. xi.

The eight kings are Robert II (1371), Robert III, and the six Jameses. Those in the glass are James's successors.

125–132. Another interpolation; and another confusion in the stage-directions. Hecate "retired" at l. 43, and has not reëntered since. The "antic round" is ludicrously incongruous here.

138. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost,* ii. 662 —

> "Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when called
> In secret, riding through the air she comes;
> Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
> With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon
> Eclipses at their charms."

This passage also illustrates ll. 28–30. Milton was evidently familiar with *Macbeth,* and once contemplated using the subject himself.

142. As to the difficulty in time involved here, cf. note at end of act iii, scene 6.

The flight of Macduff, with that of Fleance, and the deceitful prophecy of the witches, are the three "accidents" which point to the working of spiritual forces against Macbeth.

SCENE 2

Macbeth's Third Crime marks a stage in his moral degradation. Compared with those that went before it is purposeless, merely an expression of the tyrannic mind, partly unhinged by fear. Its only effect is to make the day of reckoning more certain. A slight relief to the tragedy is afforded by the opening dialogue between

Lady Macduff and her son. Shakespeare's children — cf. Mamillius in *The Winter's Tale* — are singularly precocious in their *naïveté*. He uses them as effective mediums of irony. An added touch of pathos is given by the mistrust of her husband in which Lady Macduff dies. It should be observed that Lady Macbeth knows nothing of this murder until it is accomplished; the separation between her and her husband has advanced yet further.

Macduff's Castle, traditionally placed at Dunne-merle Castle, Culross, Perthshire.

9. ***the natural touch,*** family affection, which all things in nature share. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, iii. 3. 175, "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

Shakespeare's illustration of the wren is drawn rather from euphuistic than actual natural history.

17. ***The fits o' the season.*** Heath explains this as "what befits the season;" but it seems better to take it with other editors as a metaphor from human disease, such as an intermittent fever.

19. ***know ourselves,*** *i. e.* know ourselves to be traitors.

when we hold rumour, *i. e.* when we accept rumors, because we fear them to be true. This phrase describes Lady Macduff's condition, as the one immediately preceding does that of her husband.

22. ***and move.*** The Clarendon Press editors propose *Each way and none.* If the Ff reading is kept, "move" may be either a verb coördinate with "float," or a substantive, "motion," "direction." In either case it is an awkward phrase.

27. I think Ross means that the situation appears to him so pathetic that he should break down, if he stayed longer.

36. The emphasis in this line is on *poor*. *They* surely refers to the traps, and is not a repetition of the nominative "poor birds."

44. The broken metre gradually merges into prose, here as in act ii, scene 3 used by Shakespeare for purposes of dramatic relief.

45. A "traitor" not to her, but, in the technical sense, to Macbeth. This interpretation gives a keener point to l. 54.

66. ***perfect,*** perfectly versed.

70. ***To fright you,*** in frighting you. For a similar indefinite use of the infinitive cf. v. 2. 23, and Abbott, § 356.

71. He compares the harm which he is doing by frightening her with the far worse cruelty which others are about to do to her.

83. ***shag-hair'd.*** Steevens' reading for the *shag-eared* of Ff.

A day or two may be regarded as intervening between scenes 1 and 2 of this act, and several days, sufficient for Ross's journey to Scotland, between scenes 2 and 3.

SCENE 3

The cup of Macbeth's iniquity is full. His final Crime is directly followed by the preparation for his Punishment. In this scene, the only tedious one in the play, we learn of the preparation of an army to depose him; the characters of Macduff and Malcolm, contrasts to his as subject and king, are brought out; and in the episode of the king's evil, ll. 140–159, the peacefulness of England throws into relief the desperate condition of the neighboring kingdom. Incidentally another delicate compliment to James I is introduced.

1. Cf. *Richard II*, iii. 2. 155 —

> "For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground
> And tell sad stories of the death of kings."

3. ***mortal,*** death-dealing; cf. iii. 4. 81, note.

4. Macbeth's outrage against the Macduffs was only one of many. The usurper, or "tyrant" in the Greek sense, generally becomes, as Plato pointed out, an oppressor, or "tyrant" in the modern sense.

8. The attitude of Malcolm in the first part of this scene, down to l. 114, is actuated by suspicion. Staggered by Macbeth's treachery, he does not know where to find faith. Macduff, for all his loyal professions, may be only an emissary of the tyrant. Cf. l. 117.

10. ***to friend,*** an adjectival phrase = "friendly."

12. ***whose sole name,*** the mere mention of whose name.

15. ***deserve.*** So Theobald for *discern* of the Ff.

and wisdom. The omission of the verb is characteristic of the compressed utterance of this play.

19. ***recoil,*** swerve from right in obeying the commands of a king. Did Shakespeare intend a satire on diplomacy?

23. Cf. i. 4. 12.

25. Macduff's desertion of his wife and child have aroused Malcolm's suspicions, and so Macduff's hopes of finding him ready to lead an army to Scotland are lost.

26. ***in that rawness,*** so hurriedly.

27. ***motives,*** occasionally used by Shakespeare of persons, as in *Othello*, iv. 2. 43, "Am I the motive of these tears?" If Macduff really loved his family, their welfare would be the natural motive of his actions, and he would be bound to them with "knots of love." But in Macduff the patriot is stronger than the husband and father.

29. Malcolm apologizes for the suspicion which he only half feels. He is obliged to be cautious.

47. ***Shall.*** Cf. iii. 4. 57, note.

50. Why does Malcolm make this self-accusation? Partly to try the temper of Macduff's patriotism. For it is only Malcolm's private sins that his subject regards as "portable." When he adds that he lacks also "the king-becoming graces," then Macduff's "noble passion" shows itself. But there is a touch of deeper psychological insight in it than this. Is it not true that in the critical moments of life one is often suddenly oppressed with a sense of one's own weaknesses, and dormant if not actual tendencies to evil, which seem to cry aloud for expression, confession? Cf. *Hamlet*, iii. 1. 124.

51. ***particulars,*** "special forms" such as he subsequently enumerates.

52. ***open'd,*** made known, or possibly, carrying on the metaphor of "grafted," "burst into leaf and flower." Collier proposed *ripen'd.*

55. ***confineless,*** unbounded.

58. ***Luxurious,*** lascivious, the invariable sense of the word in Shakespeare.

59. ***Sudden,*** violent.

64. ***continent,*** restraining.

67. ***In nature*** may go with *intemperance* and = "of nature;" or with *tyranny*; if the latter, the phrase illustrates the Platonic description of the overmastering passion in the soul, as being to a man what a tyrant is to a state.

71. ***Convey,*** *i. e.* obtain in secrecy. Cf. the slang use of the term by Pistol in *Merry Wives*, i. 3. 32, "'Convey,' the wise it call. 'Steal!' foh! a fico for the phrase!"

77. ***affection,*** nature.

80. ***his,*** this one's.

86. ***summer-seeming lust,*** *i. e.* "lust which beseems youth, the summer of life," and is therefore not enduring, whereas avarice "sticks deeper" in the soul, and does not pass away. Or we may interpret the epithet as "summerlike," and compare with Malone Donne's *Love's Alchemy*, "a winter-seeming summer's night."

89. ***portable,*** bearable.

93. ***perséverance.*** Note the accent.

95. ***relish,*** savor, touch.

96. ***the division of,*** every form of.

106. ***Since that.*** "That" is often attached to prepositions to give them the force of conjunctions. So "for that" in l. 185: cf. Abbott, § 287.

108. ***blaspheme,*** slander.

111. ***Died,*** *i. e.* spiritually. Cf. *1 Corinthians*, xv. 31, "I die daily."

The missing accent here may be filled up either by accenting "livéd," or by making a dissyllable of "fare," or by a pause.

112. *repeat'st,* "tellest," with no idea of repetition.

134. *Old Siward,* Earl of Northumberland, and practically an independent chieftain in the north.

135. *at a point;* not "at a place agreed upon," as Warburton thought, but "ready," "prepared." A commoner form of the phrase is found in *Hamlet*, i. 2. 200, "Armed at point exactly;" it occurs also in *Lear*, i. 4. 347; iii. 1. 33.

136. "May our chance of good fortune be proportionate to the justness of our cause."

142. *stay,* wait for. The preposition is often omitted, especially after verbs of motion. Here, however, it is rather the absence of motion. Cf. also v. 8. 13, and Abbott, §§ 198–200.

convinces, vanquishes; cf. i. 7. 64.

143. *assay,* attempt. The whole sentence means, "Their malady is beyond the physician's skill."

146. *the evil;* the disease of scrofula, known as the king's evil, because it was believed that the touch of an annointed king was the only remedy for it. Holinshed mentions the superstition in his account of King Edward the Confessor: "He used to help those that were vexed with the disease, commonly called the king's evil, and left that virtue, as it were a portion of inheritance, unto his successors the kings of the realm." This miraculous power was claimed by several of the Plantagenets and Tudors; and James I, always superstitious, was especially proud of exercising it. See Nichols's *Progresses*, vol. iii, 264, 273. Consequently this episode is of the nature of a courtly compliment. But it has a dramatic purpose also. The picture of the good King Edward curing his subjects' disorders is in strong contrast to the tyranny and cruelty of Macbeth beyond the border.

148. *here-remain.* Cf. l. 133, "here-approach."

153. This was the practice of the Stuarts; originally an ordinary coin was used, but from the time of Charles II a special "touch-piece" was struck. In the British Museum may be seen one hung by Queen Anne round the neck of Dr. Johnson.

154. A form of prayer for the ceremony was inserted into the Book of Common Prayer in 1684, and left out in 1719.

157. Here again Shakespeare follows Holinshed: "As hath been thought, he was inspired with the gift of prophecy, and also to have had the gift of healing infirmities and diseases."

160. I suppose Malcolm recognizes his countryman by his dress.

166. A common antithesis ; cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 3. 9, "The earth, that 's nature's mother, is her tomb ;" and *Pericles*, ii. 3. 45 —

> "Whereby I see that Time 's the king of men,
> He 's both their parent, and he is their grave."

170. ***modern,*** moderate, common, ordinary ; cf. Glossary, *s. v.*

171. For the grammar of the sentence, cf. ii. 1. 57, note, and for the use of "who" for "whom," Abbott, § 274.

173. ***or ere.*** "Or" in the sense of "before" is derived, like "ere," from the A. S. *ær*. The two forms were combined for the sake of emphasis, when the original meaning of "or" was forgotten and it was looked on as a mere conjunction. Cf. Abbott, § 131.

174. ***nice,*** elaborate. In allusion to the style in which Ross has described the woes of Scotland.

175. ***doth hiss the speaker,*** for touching on matters already out of date.

176. ***teems*** is used without a preposition in *Henry V*, v. 2. 51 —

> "The even mead . . . . .
> Conceives by idleness and nothing teems
> But hateful docks, rough thistles, kecksies, burs."

177. For the irony of this passage, with the double meanings of "well" and "peace," cf. iii. 4. 25, and *Richard II*, iii. 2. 127 —

> "*K. Rich.* I warrant they have made peace with Bolingbroke.
> *Scroop.* Peace have they made with him indeed, my lord."

183. ***out,*** in arms ; as in the phrase, "out in the '45."

185. ***For that ;*** cf. l. 106, note.

202. ***possess,*** in a causative sense, "make them possessors of." Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, iii. 11. 21, "I will possess you of that ship and treasure."

208. The metaphor means, "Do not try to conceal or suppress your emotion." Collier quotes from Florio's translation of Montaigne's *Essays*, bk. i. ch. 2, "All passions that may be tasted and digested are but mean and slight." Cf. also Webster, *Vittoria Corombona*, "Those are the killing griefs, which dare not speak."

209. Cf. l. 142, note.

214. The situation has changed since the beginning of the scene. It is now Malcolm who is anxious to push on to the contemplated enterprise, while Macduff, in his turn, is deadened by personal grief, and desires only to "weep his sad bosom empty."

216. ***He has no children.*** Possibly this may refer to Macbeth, and then the sense will be, "Revenge is impossible, for I cannot

kill his children as he killed mine." But, historically, Macbeth left at least one son, and in i. 7. 54, Lady Macbeth says —

> "I have given suck and know
> How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me."

In any case a better sense is given by interpreting "he" as Malcolm, and the meaning as parallel to that of *King John*, iii. 4. 91, "He talks to me, that never had a son."

220. ***Dispute it,*** deal with the situation.

229. ***Convert*** is used intransitively in *Richard II*, v. 1. 66; 3. 64, "Thy overflow of good converts to bad."

235. ***tune.*** Rowe's emendation for the *time* of Ff. It is obvious that in an ill-written MS. the two words would closely resemble each other.

manly. Adjectives, especially those ending in *-ly*, are often used for adverbs; cf. "easy," ii. 3. 143; and "free," ii. 1. 19; also Abbott, § 1.

237. "All that we have left to do is to take leave."

239. Steevens explains the *instruments* to be Malcolm, Macduff, and the rest, who will carry out the will of heaven; and he interprets *put on* as "encourage," quoting *Lear*, i. 4. 227 —

> "That you protect this course, and put it on
> By your allowance."

But does not *instruments* mean simply "weapons," as in *Hamlet*, v. 2. 327, "The treacherous instrument is in thy hand?"

240. An expression of the fatalism that characterizes this play. Cf. i. 3. 147, "Time and the hour runs through the roughest day."

ACT V — SCENE 1

The stormy passions of the last scene are followed by one of subdued whispered horror. The retribution has begun. We see first its workings in the soul of Lady Macbeth. Throughout she is more spiritual than her husband, and with her the beginning of retribution takes the form, not of fear, but of remorse — a brooding remorse that gradually unstrings every nerve. She has taken less and less part in each succeeding crime; since act iii, scene 4 she has been absent from the stage; she has almost passed out of the life of her husband. Yet in her disordered brain, the details of his crimes jostle with those of her own. The struggle with memory and conscience has proved too much for her; her old self-command and triumphant sovereignty of will are gone.

It is not quite easy to say why prose is used in this scene. Perhaps it appeared proper to the broken utterance of sleep-walking; and of course the Doctor and Gentlewoman, whose emotions are on a lower plane throughout, could not be allowed to use blank verse if Lady Macbeth did not.

"Whether the deep melancholy of remorse often tends to exhibit itself in somnambulism is a fact which, on scientific grounds, may be doubted." (Bucknill, *Mad Folk of Shakespeare.*)

4. ***into the field.*** It would appear that Macbeth took the field to put down the Scottish rebels; cf. iv. 3. 181, *sqq.* On the approach of the English army he was driven into Dunsinane Castle; cf. v. 2. 12; 5. 5.

5. ***nightgown.*** See Glossary, *s. v.*

6. Lady Macbeth tries to get rid of the oppression of her secret by committing it to paper, as the barber whispered the truth about Midas' ears to the rushes.

12. ***watching,*** waking.

26. She cannot bear the horrors of darkness; for, when the outer senses are at rest, memory is most active.

39. Cf. Lady Macbeth's words in ii. 2. 66, "A little water clears us of this deed;" so untrue, as she knows now, except in the merest physical sense.

40. She remembers the clock striking, the moment when she was to summon Macbeth to Duncan's chamber.

Hell is murky. She imagines herself arguing with Macbeth's fears. This phrase is not an expression of her own thoughts, for it is the sense of sin, not the fear of hell, with which she is burdened.

51. ***Go to;*** a common phrase of reproach, or sometimes encouragement, as in *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 2. 169, "Go to, here's a simple line of life." Cf. Abbott, § 185.

56. "The smell has never been successfully used as a means of impressing the imagination with terror, pity, or any of the deeper emotions, except in this dreadful, sleep-walking scene of the guilty queen, and in one parallel scene of the Greek drama, as wildly terrible as this. It is that passage of the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus, where the captive prophetess, Cassandra, wrapt in visionary inspiration, scents first the smell of blood and then the vapors of the tomb breathing from the palace of Atrides as ominous of his approaching murder." (Verplanck.)

72. The Doctor understands fully now.

84. ***the means of all annoyance,*** *i. e.* all things with which she

might injure herself. He expects Lady Macbeth to commit suicide; as, no doubt, she does in scene 5. Cf. v. 8. 70.

An interval of time may be allowed between this scene and act iv, scene 3, and yet another before act v, scene 2.

SCENE 2

Lady Macbeth has passed from the stage; the rest of her tragedy is acted out in silence; only echoes of it reach us. Macbeth is left alone, face to face with his destiny. Scenes 2 and 3 put before us the tempers of the opposing parties: on the one side, loyalty and hatred of the tyrant; on the other, a spirit broken and bewildered by sin and terror.

2. ***His uncle Siward,*** cf. v. 6. 2. Holinshed makes Siward Malcolm's grandfather. Shakespeare uses "cousin" loosely enough, and in *Othello*, i. 1. 112, "nephews" is put for "grandsons;" but there is no exact parallel for this use of "uncle."

3. ***dear,*** close, personal. Cf. Glossary, *s. v.*

4. ***bleeding*** may be a substantive, but I think it is here an adjective to "alarm," which is practically equivalent to "battle." "Bleeding" is an epithet of "war" in *Richard II*, iii. 3. 94.

5. ***mortified.*** The word is generally found in a spiritual sense of one who is dead to the world. So *Love's Labour's Lost*, i. 1. 28 —

> "My loving lord, Dumain is mortified:
> The grosser manner of these world's delights
> He throws upon the gross world's baser slaves."

And cf. St. Paul, *Romans*, viii. 13; *Colossians*, iii. 5. But here the meaning seems to be "deadened," "insensible," as in *Lear*, ii. 3. 15, "their numb'd and mortified bare arms."

Birnam. The mention of Birnam here and of Dunsinane in l. 12 prepares the audience for the working out of the witches' prophecy.

11. ***first of manhood:*** cf. "near'st of life," iii. 1. 118, note.

15. The metaphor appears to be from a man with a distempered and swollen body. Macbeth's "cause" means his affairs generally, which are getting beyond his power to direct.

23. ***to:*** cf. iv. 2. 70, note.

27. ***the medicine of the sickly weal, i. e.*** Malcolm; *medicine* may here mean "doctor," rather than "physic," as the Clarendon Press editors think; but the analogous use of "purge" in the next line is against this. Cf. also iv. 3. 214.

30. ***sovereign,*** in the double sense of "royal" and "a potent remedy."

weeds: cf. the elaborate comparison of England to an unweeded garden in *Richard II*, iii. 4. The parallels between the two plays are numerous and striking. *Richard II* was probably written in 1595, but both plays deal with tyranny, and in returning to the subject Shakespeare seems to have recalled also certain phrases and metaphors from his earlier treatment of it.

SCENE 3

Macbeth has entirely lost command over himself. His rapid transitions from hope to fear, from boasting to whining, his violence to the servant, are alike evidences of internal turmoil. He is completely self-absorbed. In speaking with the doctor of his wife's state, he continually breaks off to consider his own. And in this last stress his tendency to general philosophical reflection becomes more marked. Thus, with consummate art, by leading us to regard Macbeth's fate as part of the general law of things, Shakespeare enables us to extend to him a certain measure of pity, without which the completely tragic effect would be lost. And this is helped by the return of something of his old courage in the actual presence of danger.

1. ***them,*** *i. e.* the "false thanes."

3. ***taint,*** "to lose vigor or courage [*obs.*]" (New Eng. Dict.).

4. Shakespeare's constant irony appears in the way in which Macbeth dwells on the prophecies just as they are about to betray him.

8. ***epicures.*** Holinshed frequently alludes to the introduction into Scotland by Englishmen of "riotous manners and superfluous gormandizing." For the phrase cf. *Edward III* —

> "those ever-bibbing epicures,
> Those frothy Dutchmen, puffed with double beer."

9. ***I sway by,*** either "I am directed by" or "by which I bear rule."

16. ***linen cheeks:*** cf. *Henry V*, ii. 2. 74, "Their cheeks are paper."

17. ***Are counsellors to fear,*** incite others to fear.

20. ***push*** is used several times for "attack."

21. ***disease,*** the reading of all the Ff but F 1, which reads *dis-eate.* The New Eng. Dict. under *disseat* (unseat) quotes this

line. The meaning is: "This push (onset) will chair (enthrone) me permanently, or unseat me now." *Chair* is frequently used in Shakespeare for "throne." For *cheere*, a variant spelling of Ff for *chair*, cf. *Hamlet*, iii. 2. 229, where "And anchor's cheere in prison be my scope" is explained by the New Eng. Dict. as "An anchorite's chair," etc.

22. ***way.*** Macbeth compares the "way" or course of his life to the progress of the seasons. Johnson suggested *May*, but it would be quite arbitrary so to alter the text, although the parallel between May and youth is common in Shakespeare.

23. ***the yellow leaf.*** Cf. *Sonnet* lxxiii —

> "That time of year thou may'st in me behold
> When yellow leaves, or few, or none, do hang
> Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
> Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang."

Byron has borrowed the idea in his lines headed *On this Day I complete my Thirty-Sixth Year* —

> "My days are in the yellow leaf;
> The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
> The worm, the canker, and the grief
> Are mine alone."

29. ***Seyton.*** "The Setons of Touch were hereditary armor-bearers to the kings of Scotland." (French.)

39. ***Cure her.*** So all Ff but F 1, which has only *Cure*. In any case it is clear that Macbeth is thinking far more of his own "mind diseased" than of his wife's.

42. ***written,*** and so permanent. Cf. *Hamlet*, i. 5. 98 —

> "Yea, from the table of my memory
> I'll wipe away all trivial fond records;"

and, lower down, "the book and volume of my brain."

43. ***oblivious,*** causing oblivion. Cf. "the insane root," i. 3. 84, note; and Milton's "the oblivious pool," *Paradise Lost*, i. 266; "that forgetful lake," *id.* ii. 74.

44. The repetition of "stuff'd" and "stuff" is by no means un-Shakespearian; cf. v. 2. 19; 4. 11. Most Elizabethan authors love such jingles, and the fact that they are often unpleasing does not warrant us in removing them.

50. ***cast,*** the technical term for discovering a disease by the inspection of urine.

54. ***Pull 't off, I say.*** "Addressed to Seyton and referring to some part of the armor." (Schelling.)

55. ***senna;*** so F 4. F 1 has *cyme*, F 2, F 3 *caeny;* both meaningless. Senna, like rhubarb, was regarded as a purgative or cathartic. Observe that Macbeth uses the same metaphor as Caithness in v. 2. 28.

Another interval may be assumed after this scene.

SCENE 4

The catastrophe of Macbeth's fate begins with the fulfilment of the prediction as to Birnam wood in this scene and is completed by that as to the birth of his destroyer in scene 8. The toils of retribution close quickly round him. The traditions of Elizabethan drama obliged Shakespeare to make an attempt to represent war on the stage, and the only possible method was that of short typical scenes. But, dramatically, these represent a single continuous action.

11. "Where he is obliged to give them an advantage or opportunity (*i. e.* in the open field) there his followers revolt." The lines are rather obscure, but the substitution of *taken* or *gained* for *given* in l. 11 does not help much. On the repetition cf. v. 4. 43, note.

12. ***Both more and less,*** both small and great; nobles and commons.

14. "Let us wait to give a correct opinion of the state of things until the real outcome declares itself," *i. e.* "let us act and not speculate;" cf. ll. 19, 20.

18. ***owe*** must be here used in its modern sense, to give an antithesis to "have." For the Shakespearian sense of it as "possess," cf. i. 4. 10; iii. 4. 112.

20. Rhetorically the speech ends with the rhymed couplets. Siward adds a command to the troops in another tone. During this scene there has been a halt for the purpose of cutting branches.

SCENE 5

5. ***forced,*** strengthened.

6. ***dareful,*** here only in Shakespeare.

9. Even as of old, the immediate necessity for action finds Macbeth in his element; it is only the intervals, giving free scope to his imagination, that unman him.

11. Cf. act ii, scene 1.

17. I think that this line can only be taken as an expression of Macbeth's callous indifference to everything but his own danger. His wife's death arouses no emotions; it only suggests a general reflection on the transiency of things.

18. ***such a word,*** as "Death."

19–22. An exact analysis of these lines is impossible, but the general idea, of the vanity of human life and the inevitableness of death, is very plain. Of course this speech is Macbeth's and not Shakespeare's, but it well represents the pessimism, which was a common mood of the poet's, especially in his tragic period, and which finds a place also in the *Sonnets*.

24. Another of Shakespeare's favorite metaphors from the stage; cf. i. 3. 128; ii. 4. 5, &c.

42. ***pull in.*** Steevens explains this as "I check the confidence to which I before gave rein." Johnson proposed *pall in*, and the Clarendon Press editors *pale in*.

43. Cf. Banquo's warning in i. 3. 123.

50. ***the estate o' the world.*** Cf. the well-known quatrain in Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Khayyám —

> "Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
> To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
> Would we not shatter it to bits,—and then
> Remould it nearer to the heart's desire?"

SCENE 6

1. ***leavy,*** leafy.

2. ***uncle,*** cf. v. 2. 2, note.

4. ***our first battle,*** the first division of our army.

7. ***Do we but find.*** This may be taken as a conditional clause, or as an instance of the use of a subjunctive to express a wish: cf. Abbott, § 364.

SCENE 7

It would be a little trite to let Macbeth fall by the hand of Macduff at once; therefore he is allowed to show his bravery first in the vanquishing of young Siward.

2. ***the course,*** a term in bear-baiting, analogous to a "round" in boxing, a "fall" in wrestling, or a "bout" in fencing. Cf. *Lear*, iii. 7. 54, "I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course."

3. Macbeth comforts himself with repeating the words of the second prophecy, though he can only have half believed it in his heart after the failure of the first.

18. ***either thou,*** an abbreviated expression for "either thou shalt meet me."

20. ***undeeded.*** Shakespeare is fond of coining these picturesque negatives, in which the English language is not too rich.

24. ***gently,*** without need of an assault.

28, 29. ***foes That strike beside us.*** Delius explains this as referring to the thanes who had deserted Macbeth; cf. l. 25: the Clarendon Press editors interpret *strike beside* as "deliberately miss."

SCENE 8

1. ***the Roman fool.*** Several of the heroes of Shakespeare's Roman plays, Brutus, Cassius, Antony, end their lives by suicide.

5. This is the only touch of real remorse in Macbeth.

9. ***intrenchant.*** Abbott, § 372, gives several instances of the use of active participles in a passive sense. For the idea cf. *Hamlet*, i. 1. 146, "the air invulnerable," and iv. 1. 44, "woundless air."

13. Cf. iv. 3. 142, note.

14. ***angel,*** the "fiend" of v. 6. 43. The word is often used of an evil spirit, cf. the good and bad angels of *Sonnet* cxliv.

still, constantly.

18. ***my better part of man,*** the nobler part of him, his courage.

34. ***Exeunt fighting.*** The Ff have *Enter fighting and Macbeth slain.* But the Ff stage-directions are confused throughout this scene. It is not unlikely, however, that in actual performance Macbeth was killed on the stage.

Retreat. This would be sounded by the trumpets of Macbeth's flying host; the *Flourish*, by the advancing English.

40. ***only . . . but,*** for the repetition cf. "or ere" (iv. 3. 173) and see Abbott, § 130.

41. ***confirm'd,*** proved.

54. ***stands.*** No doubt the head was fixed on a pike. Malone added *on a pole* to the stage-direction of the Ff.

56. ***thy kingdom's pearl,*** wealth, ornament. Malone quotes exactly similar uses of the word from Sylvester, Sidney, and Florio.

61. ***loves:*** for the plural cf. iii. 1. 121, note.

75. ***Scone.*** Cf. ii. 4. 31, note.

APPENDIX A

SIMON FORMAN

Simon Forman was a quack and astrologer, who died in 1611, and left, among other MSS., a *Book of Plaies and Notes thereof, for common Pollicie.* This is now in the Bodleian Library (Ashmolean MSS. 208), and has been privately reprinted by Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps. Among the plays seen by Forman were *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Macbeth*, and a play of *Richard II* which was not that by Shakespeare. He gives the following account of *Macbeth:*

"In Macbeth, at the Globe, 1610, the 20th of April, Saturday, there was to be observed first how Macbeth and Banquo two noblemen of Scotland, *riding through a wood*, there stood before them three women, fairies or nymphs, and saluted Macbeth, saying three times unto him, Hail, Macbeth, *king* of Codor, for thou shall be a king, but shall beget no kings, &c. Then said Banquo, What, all to Macbeth and nothing to me? Yes, said the nymphs, Hail, to thee, Banquo; thou shall beget kings, yet be no king. And so they departed, and came to the Court of Scotland, to Duncan king of Scots, and it was in the days of Edward the Confessor. And Duncan bade them both kindly welcome, *and made Macbeth forthwith Prince of Northumberland*, and sent him home to his own castle, and appointed Macbeth to provide for him, for he would sup with him the next day at night, and did so. And Macbeth contrived to kill Duncan, and through the persuasion of his wife did that night murder the king in his own castle, being his guest. And there were many prodigies seen that night and the day before. And when Macbeth had murdered the king, *the blood on his hands could not be washed off by any means, nor from his wife's hands*, which handled the bloody daggers in hiding them, by which means they became both much amazed and affronted. The murder being known, Duncan's two sons fled, the one to England, *the* [*other to*] *Wales*, to save themselves; they being fled, they were supposed guilty of the murder of their father, which was nothing so. Then was Macbeth crowned king, and then he for fear of Banquo, his old companion, that he should beget kings but be no king him-

self, he contrived the death of Banquo, and caused him to be murdered on the way as he rode. The next night, being at supper with his noblemen, whom he had bid to a feast, to the which also Banquo should have come, he began to speak of noble Banquo, and to wish that he were there. And as he thus did, standing up to drink a carouse to him, the ghost of Banquo came and sat down in his chair behind him. And he, turning about to sit down again, saw the ghost of Banquo which fronted him so, that he fell in a great passion of fear and fury, uttering many words about his murder, by which, when they heard that Banquo was murdered, they suspected Macbeth. Then Macduff fled to England to the king's son, and so raised an army and came into Scotland, and at Dunscenanyse overthrew Macbeth. In the meantime, while Macduff was in England, Macbeth slew Macduff's wife and children, and after, in the battle, Macduff slew Macbeth. Observe also how Macbeth's queen did rise in the night in her sleep, and walked, and talked and confessed all, and the Doctor noted her words."

The passages printed in italics show either that Forman was an inaccurate observer, or that the play as presented on April 20, 1610, was in several points different from the version that we possess. The statement that Macbeth was created Prince of Northumberland makes one incline toward the former explanation.

APPENDIX B

THE EDITIONS OF 1673 AND 1674

These two versions have been confused by editors; but they are distinct, and different in character. The edition of 1673 is in the main a reprint, with some inaccuracies, of the First Folio. But it contains, in addition, three songs. One of those is that indicated in the stage-direction to iii. 5. 33. It occurs also in Middleton's *The Witch*, act iii, sc. 3. There are a few unimportant differences between the texts. In *The Witch* the song runs as follows:

Voice. (*Above.*) Come away, come away.
Hecate, Hecate, come away!
Hec. I come, I come, I come,
With all the speed I may,
With all the speed I may.
Where 's Stadlin?
Voice. (*Above.*) Here.
Hec. Where 's Puckle?
Voice. (*Above.*) Here;
And Hoppo too, and Hellwain too;
We lack but you, we lack but you;
Come away, make up the count.
Hec. I will but 'noint, and then I mount.
[*A spirit like a cat descends.*
Voice. (*Above.*) There 's one comes down to fetch his dues,
A kiss, a coll, a sup of blood;
And why thou stay'st so long
I muse, I muse,
Since the air 's so sweet and good.
Hec. O, art thou come?
What news, what news?
Spirit. All goes still to our delight:
Either come, or else
Refuse, refuse.
Hec. Now I 'm furnished for the flight.
(*Going up.*) Now I go, now I fly,
Malkin my sweet spirit and I.
O what a dainty pleasure 't is
To ride in the air

When the moon shines fair,
And sing and dance, and toy and kiss.
Over woods, high rocks, and mountains,
Over seas, our mistress' fountains,
Over steeples, towers, and turrets,
We fly by night, 'mongst troops of spirits:
No ring of bells to our ear sounds,
No howls of wolves, no yelps of hounds;
No, not the noise of water's breach,
Or cannon's throat our height can reach.
Voices. (*Above.*) No ring of bells, etc.

The other two songs are introduced for the Witches at the end of act ii, sc. 2, and of act ii, sc. 3, respectively. There is no proof of their authorship, but they may be by Davenant, who seems to have acted as editor to the version published in the next year, 1674. The title-page of this is as follows:

Macbeth | A | Tragedy. | With all the | Alterations, | Amendments, | Additions, | and | New Songs. | As it 's now Acted at the Duke's Theatre | London. | Printed for P. Chetwin, and are to be Sold | by most Booksellers, 1674.

The "new songs" include the three already printed in 1673, and a fourth, also taken from *The Witch*, act v, sc. 2, and indicated in the stage-direction to iv. 1. 43 of the Folio *Macbeth*.

Black spirits and white, red spirits and gray,
Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may!
Titty, Tiffin,
Keep it stiff in;
Firedrake, Puckey,
Make it lucky;
Liard, Robin,
You must bob in.
Round, around, around, about, about!
All ill come running in, all good keep out!

Davenant's "Amendments, Alterations and Additions" amount to an entire recasting of the play. Many of Shakespeare's most characteristic passages are cut out, and replaced by worthless stuff of the adapter's own. But it is notable that several of the passages omitted by Davenant are exactly those which more recent editors have wished to reject as un-Shakespearian. Such are the episodes of the Porter, of the touching for the evil, of Siward and his son. (Cf. Appendix G.)

APPENDIX C

SHAKESPEARE'S HISTORICAL AUTHORITY

The historical incidents of Macbeth are derived by Shakespeare from Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicle of Scotland*. This was part of a great folio collection of Chronicles and Descriptions of England, Scotland, and Ireland, which Holinshed, with the assistance of William Harrison and Richard Stanihurst, gave to the world in 1578. A second edition, apparently the one used by Shakespeare, was published in 1587.

It has been thought worth while to reprint here the chief passages which served Shakespeare as material for his play. Besides those taken from Holinshed's account of Duncan and Macbeth, there are some belonging to the earlier reign of King Duff and to other parts of the Chronicles. They are arranged, for the convenience of the student, under the scenes which they illustrate.

Act I, Scene 2 — *From the Chronicle of King Duncan*

"After Malcolme succeeded his Nephew Duncan, the sonne of his doughter Beatrice: for Malcolme had two daughters, y^e^ one which was this Beatrice, being giuen in marriage vnto one Abbanath Crinen, a man of great nobilitie, and Thane of the Isles and west partes of Scotlande, bare of that marriage the foresayd Duncan: The other called Doada, was married vnto Synell the Thane of Glammis, by whom she had issue one Makbeth a valiant gentleman, and one that if he had not bene somewhat cruell of nature, might haue bene thought most worthie the gouernment of a realme. On the other parte, Duncan was *so softe and gentle of nature* (i. 7. 16) that the people wished the inclinations & maners of these two cousines to haue bene so tempered and enterchaungeably bestowed betwixt them, that where the one had to much of clemencie, and the other of crueltie, the meane vertue betwixt these twoo extremities, might haue reygned by indifferent particion in them bothe, so shoulde Duucan haue proued a worthy king, and Makbeth an excellent captaine. The beginning of Duncanes reigne was very quiet & peaceable, without any notable trouble, but after

it was perceyued how negligent he was in punishing offenders, many misruled persons tooke occasion thereof to trouble the peace and quiet state of the common wealth, by seditious commotions whiche firste had theyr beginnings in this wise. Banquho the Thane of Lochquhaber, *of whom the house of the Stewardes is descended* (iv. 1. 111), the whiche by order of lynage hath nowe for a long time enjoyed the crowne of Scotlande, euen till these our dayes, as he gathered the finaunces due to the king, and further punished somewhat sharpely suche as were notorious offenders, being assayled by a number of rebelles inhabiting in that countrey, and spoyled of the money and all other things, had muche ado to get away with life after he had receyued sundry grieuous woundes amongst them. Yet escaping theyr handes after he was somewhat recouered of his hurtes and was able to ride, he repayred to the courte, where making his complaint to the king in most earnest wise, he purchased at length that the offenders were sente for by *a Sergeant at armes* (i. 2. 3), to appeare to make aunswere vnto suche mater as shoulde be layde to theyr charge, but they augmenting theyr mischeeuous acte with a more wicked deede, after they had misused the messenger with sundry kindes of reproches, they finally slew him also. Then doubting not but for suche contemptuous demeanour agaynst the kings regall authoritie, they shoulde be inuaded with all the power the king coulde make, Makdowalde one of great estimation amongst them making first a confederacie with his nearest frendes and kinsmen, tooke vpon him to be chiefe captayne of all suche rebelles, as woulde stande against the king. . . . He vsed also suche subtile perswasions and forged allurements, that in a small time he had got togither a mightie power of men: for *out of the westerne Isles* (i. 2. 12), there came vnto him a great multitude of people, offering themselues to assist him in that rebellious quarell, and out of Ireland in hope of the spoyle came no small number of *Kernes & Galloglasses* (i. 2. 12) offering gladly to serue vnder him, whither it shoulde please him to lead them. Makdowald thus hauing a mightie puyssance about him, encountred with suche of the kings people as were sent against him into Lochquhabir, and discomfiting them, by fine force tooke theyr captaine Malcolme, and after the end of the batayle smoote of his head. This ouerthrow beyng notified to the king, did put him in wonderfull feare, by reason of his small skill in warlyke affayres. Calling therfore his nobles to a counsell, willed them of their best aduise for the subduing of Makdowald and other the rebelles. Here in sundry heades (as it euer happeneth) being

sundry opinions, whiche they vttered according to euery man his skill, at length Makbeth speaking muche against the kings softnesse, & ouer muche slacknesse in punishing offenders, whereby they had such time to assemble togither, he promised notwithstanding, if the charge were committed vnto him and to Banquho, so to order the mater, that the rebelles should be shortly vanquished and quite put downe, and that not so much as one of them shoulde be founde to make resistance within the countrey. And euen so came it to passe: for being sente foorth with a newe power, at his entering into Lochquhaber, the fame of his coming put y^e^ enimies in suche feare, that a great number of them stale secretely away from theyr captaine Makdowald, who neuerthelesse enforsed thereto, gaue batayle vnto Makbeth, with the residue whiche remained with him but being ouercome and fleing for refuge into a castell (within the whiche hys wyfe and chyldren were enclosed,) at length when he saw he coulde neyther defend the hold any longer against his enimies, nor yet vpon surrender be suffered to depart with lyfe saued, he first slew his wife & children, and lastly himselfe, least if he had yeelded simply, he shoulde haue bene executed in most cruell wise for an example to other (i. 4. 3). . . . Thus was iustice and lawe restored againe to the old accustomed course by the diligent meanes of Makbeth. Immediatly wherevpon worde came that Sueno king of Norway was arriued in Fyfe with a puysant army to subdue the whole realme of Scotland."

Holinshed goes on to relate the story of the Danish wars. In the course of these the Scots overcame an army by the following trick:

"The Scots herevpon tooke *the iuyce of Mekilwort beries* (i. 3. 84) & mixed the same in theyr ale and bread, sending it thus spiced and confectioned in great abundance vnto their enimies. They reioysing that they had got meate and drinke sufficient to satisfie theyr bellies, fell to eating and drinking after such greedy wise, that it seemed they stroue who might deuoure & swallow vp most, till the operation of the beries spred in suche sorte through all the partes of their bodies, that they were in the ende brought into a fast dead sleepe, that in maner it was vnpossible to awake them. Then foorthwith Duncane sent vnto Makbeth, commaunding him with all diligence to come and set vpon the enimies, being in easie pointe to be ouercome. Makbeth making no delay came with his people to the place, where his enimies were lodged, & first killing the watche, afterwards entred the campe, and made suche slaughter on all sides without any resistance, that it was a wonderfull mater

to behold, for the Danes were so heauy of sleepe, that the most parte of them were slayne & neuer styrred: other that were awakened eyther by the noyse or otherwayes foorth, were so amazed and dyzzie headed vpon their wakening, that they were not able to make any defence, so that of the whole numbers there escaped no moe but onely Sueno himselfe and tenne other persons, by whose help he got to his shippes lying at rode in the mouth of Tay."

The close of the wars is described thus:

"To resist these enimies, whiche were already landed, and busie in spoiling the countrey, Makbeth and Banquho were sente with the kings authoritie, who hauing with them a conuenient power, encountred the enimies, slewe parte of them, and chased the other to their shippes. They that escaped and got once to theyr shippes, *obtayned of Makbeth for a great summe of golde, that suche of theyr freendes as were slaine at this last bickering might be buried in Saint Colmes Inche* (i. 2. 60). In memorie whereof, many olde Sepultures are yet in the sayde Inche, there to be seene grauen with the armes of the Danes, as the maner of burying noble men still is, and heretofore has bene vsed." . . .

Act I, Scene 3 — *From the Chronicle of King Duff*

This is part of Holinshed's account of the mysterious sickness of that king:

"In the meane time the king *fell into a languishing disease* (i. 3. 23), not so greeuous as strange, for that none of his Phisitions coulde perceyue what to make of it. . . . But about that present time there was a murmuring amongst the people, how the king was vexed with no naturall sicknesse, but by sorcery and Magicall arte, practised by a sort of Witches dwelling in a towne of Murrayland, called Fores. Wherevpon, albeit the Authour of this secrete talke was not knowen, yet being brought to the kings eare, it caused him to sende forthwith certaine wittie persons thither to enquyre of the truth. They that were thus sent, dissembling the cause of theyr iourney, were receyued in the darke of the night into the castell of Fores by the lieutenant of the same, called Donwald, who continuing faithful to the king, had kepte that castell agaynst the rebells to the kings vse. . . . He sent foorth souldiers, about the midst of the night, who breaking into y^e^ house, found one of the Witches rosting vpon a woodden broche an image of waxe at the fire, resembling in ech feature the kings person, made & deuised as is to be thought, by craft & arte of the Deuill: an other of

them sat reciting certain words of enchauntment, & still basted the image with a certaine licour very busily. The souldiers finding them occupied in this wise, tooke them togither with the image, & led them into the castell, where being streitly examined for what purpose they went about such maner of enchantment, they answered, to the end to make away ye king: for as ye image did wast afore the fire, so did the bodie of the king breake forth in sweate. And as for the wordes of enchauntment, they serued to keepe him still waking from sleepe, so that as the waxe euer melted, so did the kings flesh: by which meanes it should haue come to passe, that when ye waxe were once cleane consumed, the death of the king should immediately follow. So were they taught by euill sprites, & hyred to worke the feat by the nobles of Murrayland. The standers by that herd such an abhominable tale told by these Witches, streight wayes brake the image, & caused ye Witches (according as they had well deserued) to bee burnt to death. It was sayd that the king, at the very same time that these things were a doyng within the castell of Fores, was deliuered of his languor, and slepte that night without any sweate breaking forth vpon him at all, and the next day being restored to his strength, was able to do any maner of thing that lay in man to do." . . .

From the Chronicle of King Duncan

"Shortly after happened a straunge and vncouth wonder, whiche afterwarde was the cause of muche trouble in the realme of Scotlande as ye shall after heare. It fortuned as Makbeth & Banquho iourneyed towarde Fores, where the king as then lay, they went sporting by the way togither without other companie, saue only themselues, passing through the woodes and fieldes, when sodenly in the middes of a launde, there met them .iij. women in straunge & ferly apparell, resembling creatures of an elder worlde, whom when they attentiuely behelde, wondering much at the sight, The first of them spake and sayde: All hayle Makbeth Thane of Glammis (for he had lately entred into that dignitie and office by the death of his father Synel.) The .ij. of them said: Hayle Makbeth Thane of Cawder: but the third said: All Hayle Makbeth that hereafter shall be king of Scotland. Then Banquho, what maner of women (saith he) are you, that seeme so litle fauourable vnto me, where as to my fellow here, besides highe offices, yee assigne also the kingdome, appointyng foorth nothing for me at all? Yes sayth the firste of them, wee promise greater benefites vnto thee, than

vnto him, for he shall reygne in deede, but with an vnluckie ende: neyther shall he leaue any issue behinde him to succeede in his place, where contrarily thou in deede shall not reygne at all, but of thee those shall be borne whiche shall gouerne the Scottishe kingdome by long order of continuall discent. Herewith the foresayde women vanished immediately out of theyr sight. This was reputed at the first but some *vayne fantasticall illusion* (i. 3. 52) by Makbeth and Banquho, in so muche that Banquho woulde call Makbeth in ieste kyng of Scotland, and Makbeth againe would call him in sporte likewise, the father of many kings. But afterwards the common opinion was, that these women were eyther *the weird sisters* (i. 3. 32, etc.), that is (as ye would say) y^e^ Goddesses of destinie, or els some Nimphes or Feiries, endewed with knowledge of prophesie by their Nicromanticall science, bicause euery thing came to passe as they had spoken. For shortly after, the Thane of Cawder being condemned at Fores of treason against the king committed, his landes, liuings and offices were giuen of the kings liberalitie vnto Makbeth. The same night after, at supper Banquho iested with him and sayde, now Makbeth *thou haste obtayned those things which the twoo former sisters prophesied* (ii. 1. 21), there remayneth onely for thee to purchase that which the third sayd should come to passe. Wherevpon Makbeth reuoluing the thing in his minde, began euen then to deuise howe he might attayne to the kingdome: but yet hee thought with himselfe that he must tary a time, whiche shoulde aduaunce him thereto (*by the diuine prouidence* (i. 3. 143)) as it had come to passe in his former preferment."

Act 1, Scene 4 — *From the Chronicle of King Duncan*

"But shortely after it chaunced that king Duncane hauing two sonnes by his wife *which was the daughter of Sywarde Earle of Northumberland* (v. 2. 2), he made the elder of them cleped Malcolme prince of Cumberlande, as it were thereby to appoint him his successor in the kingdome, immediately after his deceasse. Makbeth sore troubled herewith, for that he sawe by this meanes his hope sore hindered, (where by the olde lawes of the realme, the ordinance was, that if he that shoulde succeede were not of able age to take the charge vpon himselfe, he that was nexte of bloud vnto him, shoulde be admitted) he beganne to take counsell howe he might vsurpe the kingdome by force, hauing a iuste quarell so to do (as he tooke the mater,) for that Duncane did what in him lay to defraude him of all maner of title and clayme, whiche hee mighte in tyme to come, pretende vnto the crowne."

ACT I, SCENE 3, TO ACT II, SCENE 4 — *From the Chronicle of King Duncan*

"The woordes of the three weird sisters also greatly encouraged him herevnto, but specially his wife lay sore vpon him to attempt the thing, as she that was very ambitious brenning in vnquenchable desire to beare the name of a Queene.

"At length therefore communicating his purposed intent with his trustie frendes, *amongst whom Banquho was the chiefest, vpon confidence of theyr promised ayde* (ii. 1. 25), he slewe the king at Enuernes, (or as some say at Botgosuane,) in the .vj. yeare of his reygne. Then hauing a companie about him of such as he had made priuie to his enterpryce, he caused himselfe to be proclaymed king, and foorthwith went vnto Scone, where by common consent, he receyued the inuesture of the kingdome according to the accustomed maner. The bodie of Duncane was firste conueyed vnto Elgyne, and there buried in kingly wise, but afterwardes it was remoued and conueyed vnto Colmekill, and there layd in a sepulture amongst his predecessours in the yeare after the birth of our Sauiour .1040. Malcolme Cammore and Donald Bane the sonnes of king Duncane, for feare of theyr liues (whiche they might well know y^t^ Makbeth would seeke to bring to end for his more sure confirmacion in the estate) fled into Cumberland, where Malcolme remained til time that S. Edward y^e^ sonne of king Etheldred recouered the dominion of England from the Danish power, the whiche Edward receuyed Malcolme by way of moste freendly entertaynement, but Donald passed ouer into Ireland, where he was tenderly cherished by the king of that lande."

From the Chronicle of King Duff

"Donewald . . . conceyued suche an inwarde malice towardes the king, (though he shewed it not outwardly at the firste) that the same continued still boyling in his stomake, and ceased not, till through setting on of his wife and in reuenge of suche vnthankefulnesse, he founde meanes to murder the king within the foresayd Casteil of Fores where he vsed to soiourne, for the king beyng in that countrey, was accustomed to lie most commonly within the same castel, *hauing a special trust in Donewald, as a man whom he neuer suspected* (i. 5. 58): but Donwald not forgetting the reproche whiche his linage had susteyned by the execution of those his kinsmen, whome the king for a spectacle to the people had caused to

be hanged, could not but shew manifest tokens of great griefe at home amongst his familie: which his wife perceyuing, ceassed not to trauayle with him, till she vnderstood what the cause was of his displeasure. Whiche at length when she had learned by his owne relation, she as one that bare no lesse malice in hyr harte towardes the king, for the like cause on hyr behalfe than hir husband did for his freendes, counselled him (sith the king oftentimes vsed to lodge in his house without any garde aboute him, other than the garyson of the castell, whiche was wholy at his commaundement) to make him away, and shewed him the meanes whereby he might soonest accomplishe it. Donwalde thus being the more kindled in wrath by the woordes of his wife, determined to follow hyr aduise in the execution of so haynous an acte. Wherevpon deuising with himselfe for a while, whiche way he might best accomplishe his cursed intention, at length he gate oporturitie and sped his purpose as followeth. It chaunced, that the king vpon the day before he purposed to departe forth of the Castell, was long in his oratorie at his prayers, and there continued till it was late in the night, at the last comming foorth he called suche afore him, as had faithfully serued him in pursute and apprehention of the rebelles, and giuing them hartie thankes, *he bestowed sundry honorable giftes amongst them* (ii. 1. 14), of the which number Donwald was one, as he that had bene euer accompted a moste faithfull seruaunt to the king. At length hauing talked with them a long time, he got him into his pryuie chamber, only with two of his chamberlaynes, who hauing brought him to bedde came foorth againe, and then fell to banqueting with Donewald and his wife, who had prepared diuers delicate dishes, and *sundry sorts of drinke* for theyr arere supper or collation, whereat they sat vp so long, till they had charged theyr stomakes with suche full gorges, that theyr heades were no sooner got to the pyllow, but a sleepe they were so fast, that a man might haue remoued the chamber ouer them, rather than to haue awaked them out of theyr drunken sleepe. Then Donewalde though he abhorred the act greatly in his harte, yet through instigation of his wife, he called foure of his seruants vnto him (whom he had made priuie to his wicked intent before, and framed to his purpose with large giftes) and now declaring vnto them, after what sorte they should worke the feate, they gladly obeyed his instructions, and speedely going about the murder, they enter the chamber (in which the king lay) *a litle before cockes crow* (3. ii. 26), where they secretely cut his throte as he lay sleeping, without any buskling at all: and immediately by a posterne gate they caried foorth the

dead body into the fieldes. . . . Donewald aboute the time that the murder was a doing, got him amongst them that kepte the watch, and so continewed in companie with them al the residue of the night. But in the morning when the noyse was reysed in the kings chamber how the king was slaine, his body conueyed away, and the bed all berayed with bloud, he with the watche ran thither as though he had knowen nothing of the mater, and breaking into the chamber, and finding cakes of bloud in the bed & on the floore about the sides of it, *he foorthwith slewe the chamberlaynes* (ii. 3. 89), as giltie of that haynous murder, and then like a madde man running to and fro, hee ransacked euery corner within the castell, as though it had bene to haue seene if he might haue founde either the body or any of y^e^ murtherers hid in any pryuie place: but at length comming to the posterne gate, & finding it open, he burdened the chamberlaines whom he had slaine with al the fault, they hauing the keyes of the gates committed to their keeping al the night, and therefore it could not be otherwise (sayde he) but that they were of counsel in the committing of that moste detestable murder. Finally suche was his ouer earnest diligence in the inquisition and triall of the offendours herein, that *some of the Lordes began to mislike the mater, and to smell foorth shrewed tokens, that he shoulde not be altogither cleare himselfe* (iii. 6. 11): but for so much as they were in that countrey, where hee had the whole rule, what by reason of his frendes and authoritie togither, they doubted to vtter what they thought till time and place shoulde better serue therevnto, and herevpon got them away euery man to his home. For the space of .vj. moneths togither after this haynous murder thus committed, there appeared *no sunne by day, nor Moone by night in any parte of the realme, but stil was the skie couered with continual clowdes* (ii. 4. 7), and sometimes suche *outragious windes* (ii. 3. 35) arose with lightnings and tempestes, that the people were in great feare of present destruction. . . . Monstrous sightes also that were seene within the Scottishe kingdome that yeare were these, horses in Lothian being of singuler beautie and swiftnesse, *did eate their owne flesh* (ii. 4. 14). In Angus there was a gentlewoman brought forth a childe without eyes, nose, hande, or foote. *There was a Sparhauke also strangled by an Owle* (ii. 4. 13)."

From the Chronicle of King Kenneth

Kenneth had slain his nephew and heir. "Thus might he seeme happie to all men, but yet to himselfe he seemed most vnhappie as he that could not but still live in continuall feare, least his wicked

practise concerning the death of Malcom Duffe should come to light and knowledge of the world. For so commeth it to passe, that such as are pricked in conscience for anie secret offence committed haue euer an vnquiet mind. And (as the fame goeth) it chanced that *a voice was heard as he was in bed in the night time to take his rest* (ii. 2. 35), vttering vnto him these or the like woordes in effect: 'Thinke not Kenneth that the wicked slaughter of Malcome Duffe by thee contriued, is kept secret from the knowledge of the eternall God,' etc. . . . The king with this voice being striken into great dread and terror, passed that night without anie sleepe comming in his eies."

ACT III, SCENES 1–3 — *From the Chronicle of King Macbeth*

"Makbeth after the departure thus of Duncanes sonnes vsed great liberalitie towardes the nobles of the realme, thereby to winne their fauour, & when he saw that no man went about to trouble him, he set his whole intention to maintayne iustice, and to punishe all enormities and abuses, whiche had chaunced through the feeble and slouthfull administration of Duncane. . . . He caused to be slaine sundrie thanes, as of *Cathnes*, Sutherland, Stranauerne, *and Ros*, because through them and their soditious attempts, much trouble dailie rose in the realme. . . . These and the like commendable lawes, Makbeth caused to be put as then in vse, gouerning the realme for the space of tenne yeares in equall iustice. But this was but a counterfayte zeale of equitie shewed by him, partely against his naturall inclination to purchase thereby the fauour of the people. "Shortly after, he beganne to shewe what he was, in steede of equitie practising crueltie. For the pricke of conscience (as it chaunceth euer in tyrantes, and suche as attayne to any astate by vnrightuous meanes) caused him euer to feare, least he should be serued of the same cuppe, as he had ministred to his predecessour. The woordes also of the three weird sisters, wold not out of his mind, which as they promised him the kingdome, *so lykewise did they promise it at the same time, vnto the posteritie of Banquho* (iii. 1. 58). He willed therefore the same Banquho with his sonne named Fleaunce, to come to a supper that he had prepared for them, which was in deede, as he had deuised, present death at the handes of certaine murtherers, whome he hyred to execute that deede, appoynting them to meete with the same Banquho and his sonne without the palayce as they returned to theyr lodgings, and there to slea them, so that he woulde not haue his house slaundered, but that in time to come he might cleare

himselfe, if any thing were layde to his charge vpon any suspition that might arise. It chaunced yet, by the benefite of the darke night, that though the father were slaine, the son yet by the helpe of almightie God reseruing him to better fortune, escaped that daunger, & afterwardes hauing some inckling by the admonition of some frendes which he had in the courte, howe his life was sought no lesse then his fathers, who was slayne not by chaunce medley (as by the handling of the mater Makbeth would haue had it to appeare,) but euen vpon a prepensed deuise, wherevpon to auoyde further perill he fledde into Wales."

Holinshed goes on to trace the descent of the royal family of Scotland from Banquo.

Act IV — *From the Chronicle of King Macbeth*

"But to returne vnto Makbeth, in continuying the history, and to beginne where I left, ye shal vnderstand, that after the contriued slaughter of Banquho, nothing prospered with the foresayde Makbeth: for in maner *euery man began to doubt his owne life, and durst vnneth appeare in the kings presence* (iii. 6. 32), & euen as there were many that stoode in feare of him, so likewise stoode he in feare of many, in such sorte that he began to make those away by one surmised cauillation or other, whom he thought most able to worke him any displeasure. At length he found suche sweetenesse by putting his nobles thus to death, that his earnest thyrst after bloud in this behalfe, might in nowise be satisfied: for ye must consider he wanne double profite (as he thought) hereby: for firste they were ridde out of the way whome he feared, and then agayne his coffers were enriched by their goodes, whiche were forfeyted to his vse, whereby he might the better mainteyne a garde of armed men about him to defend his person from iniurie of them whom he had in any suspition. Further to the ende he might the more sickerly oppresse his subiects with all tyranlike wrongs, hee buylded a strong Castell on the top of an high hill cleped Dunsinnane situate in Gowry, ten myles from Perth, on such a proude height, that standing there aloft, a man might behold welneare all the countreys of Angus, Fife, Stermond, & Ernedale, as it were lying vnderneth him. This castell then being founded on the top of that high hill, put the realme to great charges before it was fynished, for al the stuffe necessarie to the building, could not be brought vp without much toyle and businesse. But Makbeth being once determined to haue the worke go forwarde, caused the Thanes of eche shire within the

Realme, to come and helpe towardes that building, eche man hys course about. At the last when the turne fell vnto Makduffe Thane of Fife to buylde his part, he sent workmen with all needull prouision, and commaunded them to shew suche diligence in euery behalfe, that no occasion might bee giuen for the king to finde fault with him, in that he came not himselfe as other had done, *which he refused to do* (iii. 5. 40) for doubt least the king bearing him (as he partly vnderstoode) no great good will, woulde lay violent handes vpon him, as he had done vppon dyuerse other. Shortly after, Makbeth comming to behold howe the worke went forwarde, and bycause hee found not Makduffe there, he was sore offended, and sayde, I perceyue this man will neuer obey my commaundements, till he be rydden with a snaffle, but I shall prouide well ynough for him. Neither could he afterwards abide to looke vpon the sayde Makduffe, eyther for that he thought his puissance ouer great, either els for that he had learned of *certain wysardes*, in whose wordes he put great confidence, (for that the prophecie had happened so right, whiche the three Fayries or weird sisters had declared vnto him) how that *he ought to take heede of Makduffe* (iv. 1. 72), who in tymes to come should seeke to destroy him. And surely herevpon had he put Makduffe to death, but that *a certaine witch* whom he had in great trust, had told that he should neuer be slain with man borne of any woman, nor vanquished till the wood of Bernane, came to the Castell of Dunsinnane. By this prophecie Makbeth put all feare out of his heart, supposing hee might doe what hee would, without any feare to be punished for the same, for by the one prophesie he beleeued it was vnpossible for any man to vanquish him, and by the other vnpossible to slea him. This vaine hope caused him to doe manye outragious things, to the grieuous oppression of his subiects. At length Makduffe to auoyde perill of lyfe, purposed with himselfe to passe into Englande, to procure Malcolme Cammore to clayme the crowne of Scotlande. But this was not so secretly deuised by Makduffe, but that Makbeth had knowledge giuen him thereof, for kings (as is sayde,) haue sharpe sight like vnto Linx, and long eares like vnto Midas. For *Makbeth had in euery noble mans house, one slie fellow or other in fee with him* (iii. 4. 131), to reueale all that was sayd or done within the same, by which slight he oppressed the moste parte of the Nobles of hys Realme. Immediately then, being aduertised whereabout Makduffe went, he came hastily wyth a great power into Fife, and forthwith besieged the Castell where Makduffe dwelled, trusting to haue found him therin. They that

kept the house, without any resistance opened the gates, and suffred him to enter, mistrusting none euill. But neuerthelesse Makbeth most cruelly caused the wife and childen of Makduffe, with all other whom he found in that castell, to be slaine. Also he confiscate the goodes of Makduffe, proclaymed him traytor, and confined him out of al the partes of his realme, but Makduffe was alreadie escaped out of daunger and gotten into England vnto Malcolme Canmore, to trie what purchas he might make by meanes of his support to reuenge the slaughter so cruelly executed on his wife, his children, and other friends. At his comming vnto Malcolme, he declared into what great miserie the estate of Scotlande was brought, by the detestable cruelties exercysed by the tyranne Makbeth, hauing committed many horrible slaughters and murthers, both as well of the nobles as commons, for the which he was hated right mortally of all his liege people, desiring nothing more than to be deliuered of that intollerable and moste heauie yoke of thraldome, whiche they susteyned at suche a caytifes handes. Malcolme hearing Makduffes words which he vttred in right lamentable sort, for pure compassion and very ruth that pearced his sorowfull hart, bewayling the miserable state of his country, he fetched a deepe sigh, which Makduffe perceyuing, began to fall most earnestly in hande wyth him, to enterprise the deliuering of the Scottishe people out of the hands of so cruell and bloudie a tyrant, as Makbeth by too many plaine experiments did shew himselfe to be, which was an easie matter for him to bring to passe, considering not only the good tytle he had, but also the earnest desire of the people to haue some occasion ministred, whereby they might be reuenged of those notable iniuries, which they dayly susteyned by the outragious crueltie of Makbeths misgouernance. Though Malcolme was right sorowfull for the oppression of his Countreymen the Scottes, in maner as Makduffe had declared, yet doubting whether he were come as one that ment vnfaynedly as hee spake, or else as sent from Makbeth to betray him, he thought to haue some further triall, and therevpon dissembling his minde at the first, he answered as followeth. I am truly right sorie for the miserie chaunced to my Countrey of Scotlande, but though I haue neuer so great affection to relieue y^e^ same, yet by reason of certaine incurable vyces, which raigne in me, I am nothing meete thereto: First suche immoderate lust and voluptuous sensualitie (the abhominable *fountaine of all vyces*) (iv. 3. 63) foloweth me, that if I were made king of Scots, I shoulde seeke to deflower your Maydes and matrons in such wise, that mine intem-

perancie shoulde bee more *importable* (iv. 3. 89) vnto you, than the bloudie tyrannie of Makbeth now is. Hereunto Makduffe answered: this surely is a very euill fault, for many noble Princes and Kings haue lost both lyues and Kingdomes for the same, neuerthelesse there are women ynowe in Scotlande, and therefore follow my counsell, make thy selfe king, and I shall conuey the matter so wisely, that thou shalt be so satisfied at thy pleasure in suche secrete wise, that no man shall be aware therof. Then saide Malcolme, I am also the moste auaritious creature on the earth, so that if I were king, I should seeke so many wayes to get lands and goodes, that I woulde slea the most part of all the nobles of Scotland by surmised accusations, to the end I might enjoy their lands, goods, and possessions, & therfore to shew you what mischief may ensue on you through mine vnsatiable couetise, I will rehearse vnto you a fable. There was a Foxe hauing a sore place on him ouerset with a swarme of flies that continually sucked out hir bloud, and when one that came by and saw this maner demaunded whether she woulde haue the flies dryuen besyde hir, she answered no: For if these flies that are alreadie full, and by reason thereof sucke not very egerly, should be chased away, other that are emptie and felly an hungred, shoulde light in theyr places, and suck out the residue of my bloud farre more to my grieuance than these, which now being satisfied doe not much annoy me. Therefore sayth Malcolme, suffer me to remaine where I am, least if I attaine to the regiment of your realme, mine inquenchable auarice may proue such, that ye would thinke the displeasures which now grieue you, should seeme easie in respect of the vnmeasurable outrage, whiche might ensue through my comming amongst you. Makduffe to this made answere, how it was a farre worse fault than the other, for auarice is *the roote* (iv. 3. 85) of all mischiefe, and for that crime the most part of our kings haue bene slaine & brought to their finall ende. Yet notwithstanding follow my counsel, and take vpon thee the crowne, there is golde and riches inough in Scotlande to satisfie thy greedie desire. Then sayde Malcolme againe, I am furthermore inclined to dissimulation, telling of leasings and all other kinds of deceyt, so that I naturally reioyce in nothing so muche as to betray and deceyue suche, as put any trust or confidence in my wordes. Then sith there is nothing that more becommeth a prince than constancie, veritie, truth, and iustice, with the other laudable felowship of those faire and noble vertues which are comprehended onely in soothfastnesse, & that lying vtterly ouerthroweth y^e^ same, you see how vnable I am to

gouerne any prouince or region: and therfore sith you haue remedies to cloke and hide al the rest of my other vices, I pray you find shift to cloke this vice amongst the residue. Then sayd Makduffe: this yet is the worst of all, and there I leaue thee, and therefore say, oh ye vnhappie & miserable Scottishmen, which are thus scourged with so many and sundrie calamities, eche one aboue other. Ye haue one cursed and wicked tyrant that nowe raignes ouer you, without any right or tytle, oppressing you with his most bloudie crueltie: This other that hath the right to the crowne, is so replete with the inconstant behauiour and manifest vices of English men, that he is nothing worthie to enioy it: for by his owne confession he is not onely auaritious, and giuen to vnsatiable lust, but so false a traytour withall, that no trust is to be had to any worde he speaketh. Adue Scotlande, for now I account my seife a banished man for euer without comfort or consolation; and with those words the teares trickled down his cheekes right abundantly. At the last when hee was readie to depart, Malcolme tooke him by the sleeue, and sayde, Be of good comfort Makduffe, for I haue none of these vices before remembered, but haue iested with thee in this maner, only to proue thy mind: for diuerse tymes heretofore, hath Makbeth sought by this maner of meanes to bring me into his handes, but the more slow I haue shewed my self to condiscend to thy motion and request, the more diligence shall I vse in accomplishing the same. Incontinently hereupon they embraced eche other, and promising to bee faythfull the one to the other, they fell in consultation, howe they might best prouide for al their businesse, to bring the same to good effect. Soone after Makduffe repayring to the borders of Scotlande, addressed his letters with secret dispatch vnto the nobles of the realme, declaring howe Malcolme was confederate wyth him, to come hastily into Scotlande to clayme the crowne, and therefore he requyred them, sith he was right inheritor thereto, to assist him with their powers to recouer the same out of the hands of the wrongfull vsurper. In the meane time, Malcolme purchased such fauour at king Edwards handes, that old Sywarde Earle of Northumberlande, was appoynted with ten thousande men to go with him into Scotland, to support him in this enterprise, for recouerie of his right."

From the Chronicle of King Edward the Confessor (*Chronicles of England*)

"As hath bin thought he was enspired with the gift of Prophecie, and also to haue hadde the gift of healing infirmities and diseases.

Namely, he vsed to help those that were vexed with the disease, commonly called the Kyng's evill, and left that vertue as it were a portion of inheritance vnto his successors the Kyngs of this Realme."

ACT V, SCENES 2–8 — *From the Chronicle of King Macbeth*

"After these newes were spred abrode in Scotland, the nobles drew into two seuerall factions, the one taking part with Makbeth, and the other with Malcolme. Hereupon ensued oftentymes sundrie bickerings, and diuerse light skirmishes, for those that were of Malcolmes side, woulde not ieoparde to ioyne with theyr enimies in a pight field, tyll his comming out of England to their support. But after that Makbeth perceiued his enimies power to encrease, by suche ayde as came to them forth of England with his aduersarie Malcolme, he reculed backe into Fife, there purposing to abide in campe fortified, at the Castell of Dunsinane, and to fight with his enimies, if they ment to pursue him, howbeit some of his friends aduysed him, that it should be best for him, eyther to make some agreement with Malcolme, or else to flee with all speed into the Iles, and to take his treasure with him, to the ende he might wage sundrie great Princes of the realme to take his part, and retayne straungers, in whom he might better trust than in his owne subiectes, which stale dayly from him: but he had suche confidence in his prophecies, that he beleeued he shoulde neuer be vanquished, till Byrnane wood were brought to Dunsinnane, nor yet to be slaine with anye man, that should be or was borne of any woman. Malcolme folowing hastily after Makbeth, came the night before the battaile vnto Byrnan wood, and when his armie had rested a while there to refreshe them, hee commaunded euerye man to get a bough of some tree or other of that wood in his hand, as bigge as he might beare, and to march forth therwith in such wise, that on the next morow they might come closely and without sight in thys manner within viewe of hys enimies. On the morow when Makbeth beheld them comming in this sort, hee first marueyled what the matter ment, but in the end remembred himselfe, that the prophecie which he had hearde long before that time, of the comming of Byrnane wood to Dunsinnane Castell, was likely to bee now fulfilled. Neuerthelesse, he brought his men in order of battell, and exhorted them to doe valiantly, howbeit his enimies had scarcely cast from them their boughes, when Makbeth perceiuing their numbers betook him streight to flight, whom Mak-

duffe pursued with great hatred euen till he came vnto Lunfannain, where Makbeth perceiuing that Makduffe was hard at his back, leapt beside his horse, saying, thou traytor, what meaneth it that thou shouldest thus in vaine follow me that am not appoynted to be slain by any creature that is borne of a woman, come on therefore, and receyue thy rewarde which thou hast deserued for thy paynes, and therewithall he lyfted vp his sworde thinking to haue slaine him. But Makduffe quickly auoyding from his horse, ere he came at him, answered (with his naked sworde in his hande) saying: it is true Makbeth, and now shall thine insatiable crueltie haue an ende, for I am euen he that thy wysards haue tolde the of, who was neuer borne of my mother, but ripped out of hir wombe: therewithall he stept vnto him, & slue him in the place. Then cutting his heade from the shoulders, hee set it vpon a poll, and brought it vnto Malcolme. This was the end of Makbeth, after he had raigned .xvij. yeares ouer the Scottishmen. In the beginning of his raigne he accomplished many worthie actes, right profitable to the common wealth, (as ye haue heard) but afterwarde *by illusion of the diuell* (v. 8. 19), he defamed the same with most terrible crueltie. He was slaine in the yeare of the incarnation. 1057. and in the .xvj. yeare of king Edwardes raigne ouer the English men. Malcolme Cammore thus recouering the realme (as ye haue hearde) by support of king Edward, in the .xvj. yeare of the same Edwards raign, he was crowned at Scone the .xxv. day of April, in the yeare of our Lorde .1057. Immediately after his coronation, he called a Parliament at Forfair, in the which he rewarded them with landes and liuings that had assisted him agaynst Makbeth, aduancing them to fees and offices as he saw cause, and commaunded that specially those that bare the surname of any office or landes, shoulde haue and enioye the same. He created many Earles, Lordes, Barons, and Knightes. Many of them that before were Thanes, were at this time made Earles, as Fife, Menteth, Athell, Leuenox, Murray, *Cathnes*, *Rosse*, and *Angus*. *These were the first Earles that haue beene heard of amongest the Scottishe men* (v. 8. 62) (as theyr hystories make mention)."

From the Chronicle of King Edward the Confessor

"About the thirteenth yeare of King Edwardes raigne (as some write,) or rather about the nineteenth or twentith yere as should appeare by the Scottishe Writers, Siward the noble Earle of Northumberlande with a great power of Horsemenne went into Scot-

land, and in battell put to flight Mackbeth that had vsurped the Crowne of Scotland, and that done, placed Malcolme surnamed Camoyr, the son of Duncane, sometime King of Scotlande, in the gouernement of that Realme, who afterward slew the sayd Macbeth, and then raigned in quiet. Some of our Englishe writers say, that this Malcolme was K. of Cumberlande, but other reporte him to be sonne to the K. of Cumberland. But heere is to be noted, that if Mackbeth raigned till the yere .1061. and was then slayne by Malcolme, Earle Siwarde was not at that battaile, for as our writers do testifie, he died in the yere .1055. whiche was in the yeare next after (as the same writers affirme) that hee vanquished Mackbeth in fight, & slew many thousands of Scottes, & all those Normans which as ye haue heard, were withdrawen into Scotlande, when they were driuen out of England. It is recorded also, that in the foresaid battayle, in which Earle Siwarde vanquished the Scottes, one of Siwards sonnes chaunced to be slayne, whereof, though the father had good cause to be sorowfull, yet *when he heard that he dyed of a wound which hee had receyued in fighting stoutely in the forepart of his body, and that with his face towarde the enimie, hee greatly reioyced thereat, to heare that he died so manfully* (v. 8. 46). But here is to be noted, y^{t} not now, but a little before, (as Henry Hunt. saith,) y^{e} Earle Siward, wente into Scotlande himselfe in person, hee sent his sonne with an army to conquere y^{t} land, whose hap was ther to be slaine: and when his father heard y^{e} newes, he demaunded whether he receiued the wound whereof he died, in y^{e} fore parte of the body, or in the hinder part: and when it was tolde him y^{t} he receyued it in the foreparte, I reioyce (saith he) euen with all my harte, for *I woulde not wishe eyther to my sonne nor to my selfe, any other kind of death.*" (v. 8. 48.)

APPENDIX D

WITCHCRAFT IN THE AGE OF SHAKESPEARE

The belief in evil spirits and in the power of witches to do harm was wide-spread in the 16th and 17th centuries. Statutes were passed against sorcery, and there are many accounts of the trials of persons suspected of the practice. The most interesting contemporary books on the subject are Harsnet's *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (1603); and Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584, recently edited by Dr. Brinsley Nicholson). Harsnet's tract is an enquiry into certain cases of demoniacal possession alleged to have been cured by Parsons, the Jesuit; Scot's is a noteworthy attack upon the whole superstition, and is crammed with curious magical lore. It is said to have been publicly burnt, and was reprinted in 1651. Shakespeare seems to have borrowed learning from Harsnet for *King Lear*, and possibly from Scot for *Macbeth*. He must also have had in mind a group of cases of alleged witchcraft which took place in Scotland in 1590. These are distinguished from the English cases by the importance which the power claimed for the witches of ruling the elements assumed in them (cf. i. 1. 11, sqq.; iv. 1. 52, sqq.). In 1589 the royal fleet in which James VI was bringing home his bride, Anne of Denmark, was dispersed by a sudden and violent storm. James, always intensely superstitious, became convinced that this storm was due to supernatural influence, and in the next year commenced a vigorous campaign against witches. In the course of this the charge of raising tempests and wrecking ships recurred again and again. The Scottish witches, also, unlike the English, appear to have been in the habit of going to sea in sieves (cf. i. 3. 8). A full account of these proceedings may be found in a pamphlet called *News from Scotland, declaring the damnable life of Doctor Fian, a notable Sorcerer, &c., 1591*. Eight years later (1599) James published his *Demonologie*, which was intended largely as a counterblast to the scepticism of Reginald Scot. He came to the English throne in 1603, and in 1604 passed a new statute to suppress witchcraft. This may well have recalled public attention to the matter, and suggested to Shakespeare the production or revival of *Macbeth*.

APPENDIX E

ON THE WITCH-SCENES

The passages which I believe to have been interpolated into Shakespeare's work by a later hand are three: act iii, sc. 5; act iv, sc. 1, ll. 39–43; and act iv, sc. 1, ll. 125–132. These are distinguished from the genuine witch-scenes by —

i. The introduction of a superfluous character, Hecate, who takes no real part in the action of the play.

ii. A metre which is mainly iambic, whereas that of Shakespeare's undoubted witch-scenes is, as a rule, trochaic.

iii. A lyrical element alien to the original conception of the witches. One can hardly imagine the awful beings, who meet Macbeth and Banquo on the blasted heath, singing little songs and dancing "like elves and fairies."

iv. Certain prettinesses of fancy, which are much more like Middleton than Shakespeare. See *e. g.* iii. 5. 23, 34.

With these exceptions the witch-scenes are harmonious in character, and strictly in keeping with the weird temper of the whole play. I cannot, therefore, agree with Mr. Fleay in attributing also to Middleton act i, sc. 1, and act i, sc. 3, ll. 1–37; nor do I think there is sufficient evidence to decide for or against his hypothesis that the apparition speeches in act iv, sc. 1 and ll. 92–103 of the same scene have been "worked over."

Mr. Fleay has a further theory as to the witch-scenes which demands a brief consideration. It is that the supernatural beings in act i, sc. 3 and those in act iv, sc. 1 were not meant by Shakespeare to be identical. In the heath scene he introduces "weird sisters" proper, three "fates" or "destinies" akin to the Scandinavian Norns or goddesses of past, present, and future. These in the cavern scene are replaced by three beings of quite a different type, the ordinary vulgar witches of Elizabethan popular belief. Mr. Fleay argues[1] —

(i) Holinshed speaks of Macbeth and Banquo as originally greeted by three "weird sisters, that is, as ye would say, the god-

[1] F. G. Fleay, *Shakespeare Manual*, and *Anglia*, vol. vii.

desses of destiny, or else some nymphs or fairies." (See Appendix C.) Forman also calls them "women-fairies or nymphs." (Appendix C.) These terms "weird," "nymph," "fairy," are usual terms in Elizabethan literature for such Fate-goddesses. At a later period Holinshed speaks of Macbeth as listening to "witches" and "wizards," and it is these, quite distinct from the "weird sisters," who are represented in act iv, sc. 1.

(ii) The characteristics of the two types are different. It is the Norns who can "look into the seeds of time" and prophesy of what is to come. Mere witches have no such power. On the other hand, it is the witches, and not the Norns, who use magical charms and incantations.

(iii) This view gives an explanation of the curious stage-direction in iv. 1. 38, *Enter Hecate with the other three witches.* (See notes *ad loc.*)

Mr. Fleay admits that in iii. 4. 133 and in iv. 1. 136 Macbeth speaks of the later witches as "the weird sisters." This, he somewhat tentatively suggests, may be due to a corrupt text.

Several considerations seem to be fatal to Mr. Fleay's theory.

(*a*) It implies the rejection of certain passages — i. 1; i. 3. 1–37, and iv. 1. 130, sqq., which on all other grounds may well be thought genuine.

(*b*) It is most unlikely that the distinction between Norns and witches, which we, with our modern knowledge of comparative mythology can make, would have been appreciated by Shakespeare and his audience. They would quite naturally identify the two.

(*c*) Mr. Spalding[1] has conclusively shown that what Mr. Fleay regards as the special note of the Norns, the power to see into the future, is among the common accusations made in witch trials. He also quotes instances of the use of "wayward" (="weird") and "sisters," as applied to witches.

[1] T. A. Spalding, *Elizabethan Demonology.*

APPENDIX F

ON THE PORTER SCENE: Act II, Scene 3

Coleridge was one of the most helpful and suggestive of Shakespearian critics. A poet himself, he had a genuine insight into the workings of another poet's mind. But he had not the scholarly temper, and his speculations were often brilliant rather than sane. So that his judgments upon disputed points are apt to need some reconsidering.

Speaking of *Macbeth*, act ii, sc. 3, Coleridge says:[1] "This low soliloquy of the Porter and his few speeches afterwards I believe to have been written for the mob by some other hand, perhaps with Shakespeare's consent; and that finding it take, he, with the remaining ink of a pen otherwise employed, just interpolated the words —

"'I 'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire.'

"Of the rest not one syllable has the ever-present being of Shakespeare."

The Clarendon Press editors, following Coleridge, attribute this passage, amongst others, to the hand of Middleton. Such a view appears to me undoubtedly wrong, and it is of some importance to the right understanding of Shakespeare's dramatic methods to see why it is wrong. A complete survey of the whole question is given by Mr. J. W. Hales in his *Notes and Essays on Shakespeare*, and the following argument is largely condensed from his.

The scene itself — the knocking at the gate, and the consequent entry of the porter — is an essential part of the design of the play. It follows without a break upon the preceding scene (cf. act ii, sc. 1, ll. 57, 65, 69, 74); and the "knocking" is again alluded to in act v, sc. 1, l. 65. Moreover, it is dramatically effective. This will be obvious to anyone who has seen the play upon the stage, and it is inimitably put by De Quincey[2] —

[1] *Shakespeare Notes and Lectures.*
[2] *On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth.*

"From my boyish days," he says, "I had always felt a great perplexity on one point in *Macbeth*. It was this: the knocking at the gate, which succeeds to the murder of Duncan, produced to my feelings an effect for which I never could account. The effect was, that it reflected back upon the murderer a peculiar awfulness and a depth of solemnity; yet however obstinately I endeavoured with my understanding to comprehend this, for many years I never could see why it should produce such an effect."

De Quincey proceeds to show that the object of the poet was to "throw the interest on the murderer," to give the audience a comprehension of the hell within him. He then explains that all action in any direction is best measured by reaction.

"Now apply this to the case in *Macbeth*. Here, as I have said, the retiring of the human heart, and the entrance of the fiendish heart was to be expressed and made sensible. Another world has stept in, and the murderers are taken out of the region of human things, human purposes, human desires. They are transfigured. Lady Macbeth is 'unsexed;' Macbeth has forgot that he was born of woman; both are conformed to the image of devils; and the world of devils is suddenly revealed. But how shall this be conveyed and made palpable? In order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear. The murderers and the murder must be insulated — cut off by an immeasurable gulf from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs — locked up and sequestered in some deep recess; we must be made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested — laid asleep — tranced — racked into a dread armistice; time must be annihilated; relation to things without abolished; and all must pass self-withdrawn into a deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion. Hence it is that when the deed is done, when the work of darkness is perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds; the knocking at the gate is heard; and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced; the human has made its reflex upon the fiendish; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again; and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them."

Given the entry of the Porter, it is natural that some speech should be put in his mouth. But is the speech that we find in the Folio text one suitable to the occasion, such as we can conceive Shakespeare to have written? I think that it is. Of course it is deliberately put on a lower emotional plane from what precedes

and follows; that, indeed, is sufficiently marked by the use of prose; it is in direct contrast to the tragic intensity of the murder and its detection. But is not such emotional contrast precisely characteristic of Shakespeare's tragic method? Do we not find it in *Lear*, in *Hamlet*, everywhere? Is it not of the very essence of his tragi-comedies? It is to Aeschylus or to Webster that we must go for undiluted tragedy. Shakespeare and the Romantic dramatists give us comedy and tragedy mixed. There are two reasons for this. In the first place, by the ordinary law of contrast, the juxtaposition of comedy makes the tragedy itself more real, more poignant. And second, it is the aim of the Elizabethan drama to represent human life, the whole of life, with all its incongruous medley of high and low, of light and dark, of laughter and tears. So that the introduction of this speech cannot be said to be unlike Shakespeare, or alien to his usual methods. Nor is it irrelevant in its place; for after all it but repeats, in a lower key, the dominant note of the whole situation. This *is* the gate of hell — unwittingly, while he slept, the porter *has* become a devil-porter; and "the other devil," could not one fancy that to be Macbeth himself?

As to the style of the speech, Mr. Hales conclusively shows it to be quite Shakespearian. The use of "old," the phrase "devil-porter it," the conception of an infernal janitor, the manner of the dialogue with Macduff, all of these can be easily paralleled.[1] Even Coleridge had to make an exception to his theory in favor of the bit about "the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire" — an exception fantastic in itself, and quite fatal to the idea that Middleton was the author of the passage.

[1] See notes to act ii, scene 3.

APPENDIX G

ON VARIOUS SUSPECTED PASSAGES

I accept the general contention of the Clarendon Press editors and of Mr. Fleay that this play has been rehandled, and in part, at least, by Middleton. But I am very sceptical about some of the passages that they have condemned. Arguments which depend upon a sense of style are to a certain extent legitimate in criticism, but after all they are unverifiable; they can hardly be safely applied to single lines, and the conclusions derived from them should always be held as merely probable. I cannot think that these critics have always observed a decent caution in this respect. It is worth while to consider the passages in question under various heads.

i. *The Witch Scenes.* — The Clarendon Press editors reject i. 3. 1–37; iii. 5; and iv. 1. 39–47, 125–132. Mr. Fleay adds i. 1; iv. 1. 71–2, 79–81, 89–92, 92–103, and as a corollary, iii. 4. 130–144. These have been already discussed in Appendix E.

ii. *The Porter Scene.* — The Clarendon Press editors reject ii. 3. 1–46. Mr. Fleay does not. This has been already discussed in Appendix F.

iii. *The Sergeant Scene.* — The Clarendon Press editors reject i. 2, and say: "Making all allowance for corruption of text, the slovenly metre is not like Shakespeare's work, even when he is most careless. The bombastic phraseology of the sergeant is not like Shakespeare's language even when he is most bombastic. What is said of the thane of Cawdor, ll. 52, 53, is inconsistent with what follows in scene 3, ll. 72, 73, and 112 sqq. We may add that Shakespeare's good sense would hardly have tolerated the absurdity of sending a severely wounded soldier to carry the news of victory."

The only serious points here seem to be (*a*) the "slovenly metre" and (*b*) the "inconsistencies." (*a*) Lines 3, 5, 7, 34, 37, 41, 45, 64, 66 may be explained as instances of ordinary metrical irregularities, though it must be admitted they come rather thick and fast in this scene (cf. notes *ad loc.* and Appendix H, § 5 (iii)). But some of them may also be due to the shortening of the scene

for stage purposes, and to this also I should attribute ll. 20 and 51. (Cf. Introduction, p. vi.)

(*b*) This is a real difficulty and I cannot entirely explain it. But Macbeth, on the field of battle, may not have known, as Ross did, of Cawdor's treachery. So that the only absolute inconsistency is between Angus' speech, ll. 109–116, and the general drift of sc. 2. Even here I think the confusion is more likely to be due to compression than to interpolation. For instance — in sc. 2, ll. 62–66 may have replaced a much longer passage, in which Cawdor "confessed" his treason, and was condemned. Angus may have entered at the close of that, and have been sent with Ross to Macbeth, without knowing exactly what Cawdor's crime was.

iv. *Rhyme-tags.* — The Clarendon Press editors reject ii. 1. 61. Mr. Fleay adds i. 4. 48–53; ii. 3. 127–8, 4. 37–8, 40–1; iv. 1. 153–4; v. 1. 76–7, 2. 29–30, 3. 61–2, 4. 19–20, 6. 9–10. I have no doubt that rhymed closes to speeches and scenes were often introduced to please the actors, but may they not have been written by Shakespeare himself for that purpose? Moreover I cannot see why these particular tags should be taken away and others left. They are not all particularly feeble (*e. g.* i. 4. 48–53) or un-Shakespearian (*e. g.* v. 2. 152–4, cf. note), nor is Shakespeare quite incapable of writing a feeble line at times.

v. *Miscellaneous passages.* — The Clarendon Press editors reject —

(*a*) iv. 3. 140–159 — the "king's evil" scene. These lines, they say, "were probably interpolated previous to a representation at Court." The judgment seems to me perfectly arbitrary, and it is very likely that the play was originally written for a "representation at Court." (Cf. Introduction, p. viii.)

(*b*) v. 2, about which they "have doubts." But the scene is needed as a pendant to sc. 3, and to show the feeling of Scotland towards Macbeth. The language is exceedingly Shakespearian.

(*c*) v. 5. 47–50, which they call "singularly weak" and "an unskilful imitation of other passages." The line "I 'gin to be aweary of the sun" does not strike me as "singularly weak."

(*d*) v. 8. 32–3 —

> "Before my body
> I throw my warlike shield."

They think that these words are also "interpolated." But surely no critic can seriously persuade himself that he has a sense of style delicate enough to determine whether they are Shakespeare's or not.

(*e*) v. 8. 35–75 — the relation of young Siward's death and crowning of Malcolm. Here they say, "The double stage direction. '*Exeunt fighting*' — '*Enter fighting, and Macbeth slaine*,' proves that some alteration had been made in the conclusion of the piece. Shakespeare, who has inspired his audience with pity for Lady Macbeth, and made them feel that her guilt has been almost absolved by the terrible retribution which followed, would not have disturbed this feeling by calling her a 'fiend-like queen'; nor would he have drawn away the veil which with his fine tact he had dropt over her fate, by telling us that she had taken off her life 'by self and violent hands.'"

Here I need only note that the double stage-direction only points to some rearrangement of the fighting-scenes which immediately precede, a thing very likely in view of stage-requirements; that *a priori* arguments as to what Shakespeare would have or would not have done are untrustworthy; that, to me at least, there seems to be a final touch of irony in the contrast between Lady Macbeth as Malcolm thought of her, and Lady Macbeth as we know her; that the Siward episode follows naturally on sc. 7; and that the way of winding up the play is very like that adopted also in *Hamlet*.

(*f*) Mr. Fleay adds iii. 4. 130–144, partly because it interferes with his theory of the two sets of witches, partly because of "poverty of thought," a "long tag," and "marks of inferior work." I fancy that no one who does not hold Mr. Fleay's peculiar witch-theory will share his objections to this passage. I should perhaps add that I believe Mr. Fleay has modified his published views on *Macbeth*.

APPENDIX H

METRE

I. Metre as an Indication of Date

English blank verse did not come into use till the sixteenth century, and at the commencement of its career, the rules which regulated its employment were strict. It was only when the instrument was becoming familiar that experiments could be ventured upon, and variations and modifications freely introduced. The changes in the structure of blank verse between the time when Shakespeare commenced writing and the time of his retirement are great; and the variations in this respect are among the most important indications of the date of any given play. That is to say, broadly speaking, the less strictly regular the metre, the later the play.

In the same way, a gradually increasing disregard of other kindred conventions marks the later plays as compared with the earlier. A good deal of rhyme survives in the dialogue in the earlier plays: later it is only to be found occasionally at the close of a scene or a speech to round it off — probably a concession to stage tradition. The first use of prose is only for purposes of comedy; later, it is used with comparative freedom (as in *Hamlet*) in passages of a very different type, though the introduction of verse in a prose scene always marks a rise to a higher emotional plane.

In the present play, the general characteristics of the metre appear to be those of Shakespeare's middle period; but there are an unusual number of irregularities, some of which may be due to the imperfect condition in which the text has reached us. Rhymed decasyllables at the close of a scene or a speech are frequent. Prose is used for emotional relief in ii. 3 and iv. 2; for a letter in i. 5, and for the sleep-walking scene in v. 1. The witch-passages are in short rhyming measures, mainly "trochaic" in Shakespeare's part, "iambic" in Middleton's.

II. Form of Blank Verse

Our study of versification is commonly restricted to that of Latin and Greek. When we examine English verse-structure, a distinction at once appears. In the classical verse the governing element is quantity; in English it is *stress*. And inasmuch as stress is much less definite than quantity, the rules of English verse cannot be given with the same precision as those of Latin and Greek. But we may begin with certain explanations as to what stress is *not*. A "stressed" syllable is not the same as a long syllable; nor is stress the same as *sense*-emphasis. Any strong or prolonged dwelling of the voice on a syllable, for whatever reason, is stress. So, while a syllable must be either long or short, there are many shades of gradation between the unstressed and the strongly stressed. And as in Greek tragic verse a long syllable may, in certain positions, take the place of a short one, so a moderately stressed syllable may often in English take the place of an unstressed one.

To start with — to get at the basis of our metre — we will take no account of weak stress, but treat of all syllables as if they must either have no stress or a strong stress; and throughout, the word stress, when used without a qualifying adjective, will mean strong stress. The acute accent (′) will be used to mark a stress, the grave (‵) to mark a weak stress, the ˘ to mark a syllable sounded but not stressed.

The primary form of the Shakespearian line is — five feet, each of two syllables; each foot carrying one stress, on the second syllable; with a sense pause at the end of the line.

Aroint′ | thee, witch′! | the rump′ | fed ron′ | yon cries′ (i. 3. 6).
Though bla′ | ded corn′ | be lodged′ | and trees′ | blown down′ (iv. 1. 55).

III. Normal Variations

But if there were no variations on this, the effect would be monotonous and mechanical after a very few lines.

(i.) The first variation therefore is brought about by the stress in one or two of the feet being thrown on the first instead of the second syllable, which is known as an "inverted" stress.

1st foot
Dou′bly | redou′ | bled strokes′ | upon′ | the foe′ (i. 2. 38).
2d foot
Ay′ and | since′ too | mur′ders | have been′ | perform′d′ (iii. 4. 77).

3d foot
His sil′|ver skin′|laced′ with|his gol′|den blood′ (ii. 3. 118).
4th foot
And fan′|our peo′|ple cold′.|Nor′way|himself′ (i. 2. 50).
5th foot
The great′|doom's′ im|age′—|Mal′colm!|Ban′quo! (ii. 3. 83).

In the following the stress is inverted in every foot—

Told′ by an|i′diot,|fu′ll of|sound′ and|fu′ry (v. 5. 27).

Cf. also iii. 1. 102. Observe that the stress is thus thrown back much more commonly in the first foot of the line than elsewhere; and that in the other cases the stressed syllable usually follows a pause.

(ii.) Second, variety is introduced by the insertion of an extra unstressed syllable which is not extra-metrical, analogous to the use of an anapaest instead of an iambus.

1st foot
Whăt ă haste′|looks through′|his eyes′!|So should′|he′ look (i. 2. 46).
2d foot
Thoughts spe′|cŭlătive`|their un′|sure hopes′|relate′ (v. 4. 19).
3d foot
The mul′|titu′|dĭnoŭs seas′|incar′|nadine′ (ii. 2. 62).
4th foot
I 'll be′|myself′|the har′|bĭngĕr and′|make joy′(ful) (i. 4. 45).
5th foot
Scarf′ up|the ten′|der eye′|of pi′|tĭfŭl day′ (iii. 2. 47).

Sometimes two such feet occur in a single line.

That look′|not like′|thĕ ĭnha′|bitants′|ŏ' thĕ earth′ (i. 3. 41).

As a general rule, however, such extra syllables are very slightly pronounced; not altogether omitted but slurred, as very often happens when two vowels come next each other, or separated only by a liquid (see § 6).

(iii.) The converse of this is the (very rare) omission of an unstressed syllable. This is only found where the stress is very strong, or when the omission is really made up for by a pause.

In drops′|of sor′(row).|Sons′—,|kins′men,|thanes′—(i. 4. 35).
The great′|doom's′ im|age′—|Mal′colm!|Ban′quo! (ii. 3. 83).

(iv.) Extra-metrical unstressed syllables are added after a pause, sometimes after the second foot, rarely after the third.

More frequently an extra-metrical syllable comes at the end of a line, and this is common in this play. It is only in quite early plays that it is unusual, only in the later ones that it is the normal rhythm.

The thane'|of Caw'(dor)|began'|a dis'|mal con'(flict) (i. 2. 53).
It is'|a ban'|quet' to (me).|Let's' af|ter him' (i. 4. 56).
To plague'|thĕ invent'(or),|this e'|ven-hand'|ed just'(ice) (i. 7. 10).

By an extension of this practice we sometimes have two such extra-metrical syllables.

And take'|my milk'|for gall'|you mur'|dĕring min'(isters) (i. 6. 46).

The increasing frequency of extra-metrical syllables is a useful approximate guide to the date of a play. But they are never so frequent in Shakespeare as in some of the younger dramatists.

(v.) The variation which perhaps most of all characterizes the later plays is the disappearance of the sense-pause at the end of the line. At first, a clause running over from one line to the next is very rare; in the last plays, it is extremely common. (The presence of a sense-pause is not necessarily marked by a stop; it is sufficient for the purpose that the last word should be dwelt on; the pause may be merely rhetorical, not grammatical.) The proportion of overflow to end-stopped lines in *Macbeth* is considerable.

IV. Weak Stresses

The basis of scansion being thus settled, we may observe how the rules are modified by weak or intermediate stresses, which are in fact the chief protection against monotony.

(i.) Lines in which there are not five strong stresses are very plentiful; *e. g.*

Put ran'|cours in`|the ves'|sel of`|my peace' (iii. 1. 66).

In the fifth foot particularly, the stress is often extremely slight.

(ii.) On the other hand, lines in which there are two stressed syllables in one foot are common.

That' I|may tell'|pale`-heart'|ed fear'|it lies' (iv. 1. 84).
Balm' of|hurt` minds',|great` na'|ture's sec'|ond course' (ii. 2. 39).

A foot with a double stress is nearly always preceded by a pause, or by a foot with a very weak stress only.

(iii.) It will be observed that there are never fewer than three

strong stresses, and that any foot in which there is no strong stress must at any rate have one syllable with a weak stress, and that often such a foot has two weak stresses, preventing the feeling that the line is altogether too light. Thus a syllable which is quite unemphatic acquires a certain stress merely by length, as in some of the above cases. And, speaking broadly, a very strong stress in one foot compensates for a weak stress in the neighboring foot.

V. Irregularities

(i.) Occasionally lines occur with an extra foot; *i. e.* an additional stress after the normal ten syllables.

Which he'|deserves'|to lose'.|Whe'ther|he was'|combined' (i. 3. 111).

And sometimes there is even an extra syllable added (III (iv.)).

But let'|the frame'|of things'|disjoint',|both' the|worlds` suf'(fer) (iii. 2. 16).

But this does not often occur in the course of a speech, and when it does there is usually a break in the middle of the line. It is, however, decidedly common in broken dialogue.

Ban. The air|is del|icate
Dun. See, see,|our hon|oured host(ess) (i. 6. 10).

And this is probably often to be explained by the second speaker breaking in on the first, so that one or two syllables are pronounced simultaneously.

(ii.) Lines are found, not very frequently, with only four stresses.

Tŏ thĕ self'|same` tune'|and words'.|Who 's here'? (i. 3. 88).

(iii.) Short, incomplete lines of various lengths are also found, especially in broken, hurried, or excited dialogue, and at the beginning or end of a speech. They are especially common in this play. Sometimes the gap may be filled up by appropriate action, or a dramatic pause (*e. g.* i. 2. 41; ii. 1. 41); but in many cases they are probably due to some mutilation of the text. See, *e. g.* i. 2. 20, 51; ii. 3. 85; iii. 2. 32, 51.

(iv.) Interjections and proper names (especially vocatives), even short questions or commands, are frequently extra-metrical.

Was' not|that no'|bly done'? (Ay)|and wise'|ly too' (iii. 6. 14).
How goes the night, boy? (ii. 1. 1).

Cf. ii. 1. 10; ii. 2. 18; ii. 3. 23, etc.

In nearly every instance observe that the unusual stress comes either after a pause, whether at the beginning of a line or in the middle, or at the end of a line in which there is a break.

VI. Apparent Irregularities

(i.) Difficulties occasionally arise from the fact that words in Shakespeare's day were sometimes accented in a different way from that of the present day, and sometimes even bear a different accent in different places in Shakespeare's own writing. Thus, we say *por'tent*, Shakespeare always *portent'*. On the other hand, we say *complete'*, Shakespeare has sometimes *complete'*, sometimes *com'plete*. In effect we must often be guided by the verse in deciding on which syllable of a word the accent should fall, because custom had not yet finally decided in favor of a particular syllable. Speaking broadly, the tendency of the modern pronunciation is to throw the accent far back.

(ii.) Similarly, when two vowels come together (as in words ending with *-ion*, *-ius*, *-ious*, and the like) we are in the habit of slurring the first, and sometimes of blending it with the preceding consonant; so that we pronounce *ambit-i-on* as *ambishon*. In Shakespeare the vowel in such cases is sometimes slurred and sometimes not, in the same word in different places; usually the former in the middle of a line, often the latter at the end. In such cases we must be guided simply by ear in deciding whether the vowel is slurred or sounded distinctly. And we have to decide in exactly the same way when we are to sound or not sound the terminal *-ed* of the past participle.

Thus,

Which smoked | with blood | y ex | ecu | tiön (i. 2. 18).

But,

Is ex | ecu | tion done | on Caw | dor? Are (not) (i. 4. 1).

(iii.) So again in particular words, a vowel seems to be sometimes mute, sometimes sounded. Thus in *general* (i. 2. 62), *interest* (i, 2. 64) the *e* is mute.

So too,

My young | remem | brance can | not par | allel (ii. 3. 67).

But,

Let your | remem | b[e]rance | apply | to Ban(quo) (iii. 2. 30).

(iv.) In a large number of words where a liquid (*l*, *m*, *n*, and especially *r*) comes next to another consonant an indefinite vowel sound is sometimes introduced between the two letters (just as now in many places one may hear the word *elm* pronounced *ellum*), which may be treated as forming a syllable, and sometimes the vowel is actually inserted, as in *thorough* = "through."

A somewhat exceptional instance (with *p*) is

Our cap|[i]tains,| Macbeth|and Ban|quo? Yes (i. 2. 34).

(v.) Conversely, a light vowel sound coming next a liquid is often sounded lightly and in effect dropped; so that such words as *spirit*, *peril*, *quarrel*, are practically monosyllables. (Hence such a form as *parlous* = *perilous*).

Be like|our warrant|ed quarrel.|Why are|you sil(ent) (iv. 3. 137).

(vi.) *th* and *v* between two vowels are often almost or entirely dropped and the two syllables run into one: as in the words *whether*, *whither*, *other*, *either*, *ever*, *never*, *even*, *over*. *Heaven* generally, *evil*, *devil* sometimes are treated as monosyllables.

Vowels separated by a *w* or an *h* are habitually slurred and pronounced practically as one syllable.

(vii.) *Fire* and similar words which in common pronunciation are dissyllables (*fi-er*, &c.) are commonly but not always scanned as monosyllables.

(viii.) Other ordinary contractions, such as *we'll* for *we will*, *th'* for *the* before a vowel, &c., though not shown in the spelling, are frequent.

(ix.) *Glamis* would scan best as a monosyllable in i. 3. 116; it might be either a monosyllable or a dissyllable in i. 3. 48, 71; i. 5. 20; elsewhere it must be a dissyllable.

Hecate is almost invariably a dissyllable in Shakespeare, contrary to classical usage.

Dunsinane is accented *Duns'inane* in iv. 1. 92; elsewhere *Dunsina'ne*.

VII. Difficult Lines

(i.) Her hus|band's to|Alep|po gone,|master o'|the Ti(ger) (i. 3. 7).

This would bring the line under V (i.). I know of no other instance of a line with seven stresses.

(ii.) The cur|tained'|sleep. Witch|craft cel|ebrates (ii. 1. 51).

But more likely the text is wrong, and we should have —

The cur|tain'd sleep.|Now witch|craft cel|ebrates.

(iii.) And be`|times' I|will to`|the weird`|sis'ters (iii. 4. 133).

All the stresses fall very awkwardly here.

VIII. General Hints

(i.) Often there are many possible ways of scanning a particular line, and the one adopted must depend on the individual taste of the reader. Thus he can frequently choose between III (ii.) and VI (v.).

(ii.) Irregularities are most common

(*a*) In passages of emotional excitement; *e. g.* act ii, sc. 2.

(*b*) Before or after pauses.

(*c*) Where proper names are introduced.

GLOSSARY

a-, a-making (iii. 4. 34), a degenerate preposition — "at," "on," "of," "in," prefixed to nouns and to adjectives and participles used as nouns. Cf. *Hamlet*, ii. 1. 58, "There [he] was *a*-gaming," with *Hamlet*, iii. 3. 91, "When he is drunk, *a*-sleep, or in his rage | *At* gaming."

a-, a-weary (v. 5. 49), a degenerate form of the A. S. intensive *of*. So too **an** in *Coriolanus*, i. 1. 209, "They were an hungry," and *Matthew*, xxv. 44, "an-hungred."

addition (i. 3. 106; iii. 1. 100), title.

admire (iii. 4. 110), wonder at; in the sense of the Latin *admirari*. The more modern sense is also found; cf. *Tempest*, "Admired Miranda | Indeed the top of admiration."

affection (iv. 3. 77), nature.

affeer'd (iv. 3. 34), confirmed. O. F. *afeurer*, L. L. *adforare*, to fix a price (*forum*, a market).

alarm (v. 2. 9), contest. Ital. *all' arme*, to arms! Originally it meant "a call to arms," then "a sudden attack," and, lastly, "broil," "disturbance," in a more general sense. *Alarum* is really the same word.

an (iii. 6. 19), = *and*, in the special sense of "if." Abbott, § 102, supposes the conditional force to lie in the verb introduced by *and*, but it is more likely that *and* itself was conditional, either as derived from the Norse *enda* (Skeat), or through an ellipse (Murray). Thus *And you will* may = And I hope that you will it. The form *an* was rarely used in Shakespeare's time. Except, as here, in "an 't," it occurs only once in F 1; but modern editors have appropriated it to the conditional sense of the word. *And* or *An* is often strengthened by the addition of *if*.

anon (i. 1. 10; ii. 3. 22), immediately; in a minute; A. S. *on ān*, lit. "in one (moment)."

antic (iv. 1. 130), fantastic; derived by Murray from Ital. *antico*, a cavern adorned with grotesques; but it may also be "old," and therefore "quaint"; cf. *Hamlet*, v. 2. 352, "an antic Roman," with *Hamlet*, i. 5. 172, "I'll put an antic disposition on."

approve (i. 6. 4), prove.

aroint (i. 3. 6), in the phrase "Aroint thee" (cf. *Lear*, iii. 4. 129), "begone." Skeat explains this as a corruption of prov. E. (Cheshire) *rynt thee, i. e.* "get out of the way"; the Icel. *ryma*, "make room, clear the way," connected with E. *room*.

assay (iv. 3. 143), attempt.

audit (i. 6. 27), account; Lat. *audire*, to hear.

augur (iii. 4. 124). Either "augury" or "augur"; it was evidently used in both senses. The Clarendon Press editors state that Shakespeare always uses *augurer* for "augur"; but cf. *Sonnet* cvii. "The sad augurs mock their own presage."

avaunt (iii. 4. 93), begone; Fr. *en avant*, forward.

avouch (iii. 1. 120; v. 5. 47), assert.

baby (iii. 4. 106), (1) infant, (2) doll. This latter use is not found elsewhere in Shakespeare, but it occurs in Jonson and Sidney; and Florio (*Ital. Dict.*) translates "*Pupa:* a baby or puppet like a girle."

badge, vb. (ii. 3. 107), mark, as with a badge.

battle (v. 6. 4), division of an army; cf. *3 Henry VI*, i. 1. 8; *Henry V*, iv. 3. 69; *Cæsar*, v. 1. 4; 3. 108.

beldam (iii. 5. 2), old woman; a term of contempt; Fr. *belle dame*, used ironically.

benison (ii. 4. 40), blessing; Lat. *benedictio*.

betimes (iii. 4. 133), early. *Be* is a form of *by*; when used as a prefix, it intensifies, or in some similar way modifies the sense of the word to which it is attached. Thus *betimes* is "*in good* time."

bladed (iv. 1. 55), in the green ear; cf. note *ad loc.*

bolter'd (iv. 1. 123), clotted, matted a Warwickshire phrase, lit. "swollen," "round," "lumpy," from the same root as *ball*.

bonfire (ii. 3. 21); lit. "a bone-fire"; the Lat. *pyrus* or *roga*.

borne (iii. 6. 3, 17), carried on; cf. *Cæsar*, ii. 1. 226, "Bear it as our Roman actors do."

bosom, adj. (i. 2. 64), dear, intimate; cf. *Merchant of Venice*, iii. 4. 17, "the bosom lover of my lord."

botch (iii. 1. 134), patch; of unskilful work; so the vb. in *Timon of Athens*, iv. 3. 285. "'T is not well mended so, it is but botched."

brinded (iv. 1. 1), streaked; lit. "branded, marked with a flame." The more modern form, *brindled*, does not occur in Shakespeare.

bruited (v. 7. 22), noised abroad.

censure (v. iv. 14), opinion.

chaudron (iv. 1. 33), entrails.

chuck (iii. 2. 45), chicken; a common term of endearment.

clear (i. 7. 18; ii. 1. 28), innocent.

clept (iii. 1. 94), call, name; A. S. *cleopian*. The word, so common in Chaucer, is rare in Elizabethan English. Shakespeare uses it again in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 1. 24; *Hamlet*, i. 4. 19; *Venus and Adonis*, 995.

cling (v. 5. 40), shrivel up, wither; A. S. *clingan*. The word is found in the dialects of N. and E. English; it is generally used intransitively.

close (iii. 5. 7), secret.

coign (i. 6. 7), corner; Fr. *coing*, Lat. *cuneus*, lit. "wedge." *Coin* is from the same word, because coins were stamped with wedges (Skeat).

commends (i. 7. 11), delivers.

composition (i. 2. 59), terms; *Compound* is similarly used; cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, i. 2. 27, "compound this quarrel."

compt (i. 6. 26), account. *In compt* is "subject to account."

convince (i. 7. 64; iv. 3. 143), overcome, vanquish; in the radical, but not the classical sense of the Latin *convincere*.

cribb'd (iii. 4. 24), confined; *crib* is (1) "manger," (2) "hovel," cf. *2 Henry IV*, iii. 1. 9, "Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs." So *cribbed* is synonymous with *cabined*.

dear (v. 2. 3) is used of anything that touches deeply, even if it yields pain rather than pleasure; cf. *Richard II*, i. 3. 151, "my dear exile"; *King John*, i. 1. 257, "my dear offence"; *Hamlet*, i. 2. 182, "my dearest foe."

demi-wolf (iii. 1. 94), a mongrel bred between a dog and a wolf.

drab (iv. 1. 31), harlot.

dudgeon (ii. 1. 46), hilt; "*dudgeon-hafted* means that the haft was curiously worked or ornamented; *dudgin* means covered with waving marks. Etym. unknown" (Skeat).

ecstasy (iii. 2. 22; iv. 3. 170), any abnormal state, whether of rapture, excitement, trance or madness; lit. "a being beside oneself"; from O. F. *ecstase*, L. L. *ecstasis*.

egg (iv. 2. 84), a taunt used to a boy, as being immature. So in *Troilus and Cressida*, v. 1. 41, Patroclus is called "finch-egg"; and Moth in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 1. 77, "thou pigeon-egg of discretion."

epicure (v. 3. 8), lover of luxury, glutton; cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, ii. 7. 58, and the similar use of *epicurism* in *Lear*, i. 4. 265.

faculty (i. 7. 17), power, prerogative. The nearest approach to this sense is *Henry VIII*, i. 2. 73, "ignorant tongues, which neither know My faculties nor person"; but here *faculties* may mean "qualities."

fantastical (i. 3. 53), imaginary; so *fantastic* in *Richard II*, i. 3. 299, "In thinking on fantastic summer's heat."

farrow (iv. 1. 65), litter of pigs; A. S. *fearh*, connected with Lat. *porcus*, Eng. *pork*.

favour (i. 6. 70), countenance.

fee-grief (iv. 3. 196), a peculiar private grief. Land held "in fee" is practically land held as private property, for ever. So in *Troilus and Cressida*, iii. 2. 53, "a kiss in fee-farm" is a kiss of long duration. A. S. *feoh*, cattle, property, connected with Lat. *pecus*, *pecunia*.

fell, adj. (iv. 2. 71), savage, cruel.

fell, subst. (v. 5. 11), scalp, skin, the Lat. *pellis*.

file (iii. 1. 95, 102; v. 2. 8), list.

flaw (iii. 4. 63), sudden disturbance; cf. *Measure for Measure*, ii. 3. 11, "the flaws of her own youth." Lit. "a gust of wind"; Dyce quotes from Smith's *Sea Grammar* (1627), "A flaw of wind is a gust, which is very violent upon a sudden, but quickly endeth." So "the winter's flaw" in *Hamlet*, v. 1. 239.

foison (iv. 3. 88), rich harvest; O. F. *foison*, Lat. *fusio*, pouring-out, profusion.

gallowglass (i. 2. 13), a heavy-armed Irish soldier. Cf. *2 Henry VI*, iv. 9. 25—

"a puissant and a mighty power
Of gallowglasses and stout Irish kerns."

germen (iv. 1. 59), seed; cf. *Lear*, iii. 2. 8, "Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once | That make ingrateful man."

goodness (iv. 3. 136), success; cf. *Measure for Measure*, iii. 2. 228, "Bliss and goodness on you." *Good* is often so used.

gouts (ii. 1. 46), drops; Fr. *goutte*, Lat. *gutta*.

graymalkin (i. 1. 8), the name of a cat; cf. iv. 1. 1, "the brinded cat." *Malkin* is a diminutive of *Mary*.

gulf (iv. 1. 23), stomach; cf. *Coriolanus*, i. 1. 107, where the belly is accused "that only like a gulf it did remain | I' the midst o' the body." The word is connected with the vb. *to gulp*.

harbinger (i. 4. 45; v. 6. 10), forerunner; M. E. *herbergeour*, O. F. *herberg-er*, one who provided lodgings for a man of rank.

harness (v. 5. 52), armor.

harp (iv. 1. 74). touch, hit upon; as a harp is struck with the fingers.

hoodwink (iv. 3. 72), blindfold; probably a metaphor from falconry; hawks were "hooded" when not in use.

housekeeper (iii. 1. 97), housedog. The name occurs, amongst those of other species of dogs, in Topsell's *History of Beasts* (1658).

hurlyburly (i. 1. 3), tumult; a reduplicated form of *hurly;* cf. *King John*, iii. 4. 169, "Methinks I see this hurly all on foot."

'ild (i. 6. 13), in the phrase "God 'ild you" = "May God reward you"; from *A. S. gieldan*, to pay.

incarnadine (ii. 2. 62), redden. The word is used as an adj. by Carew, *Obsequies to the Lady Anne Hay*, "a fourth, incarnadine, thy rosy cheek"; and by Sylvester, of the phoenix—

"Her wings and train of feathers mixed fine
Of orient azure and incarnadine."

inhabit (iii. 4. 105), abide; often used intransitively.

intrenchant (v. 8. 9), indivisible; so *entrench*, "divide," in *All's Well*, ii. 1. 45, "This very sword entrenched it."

jutty (i. 6. 6), projection; also used as a vb.; cf. *Henry V*, iii. 1. 13, "as doth a galled rock | O'erhang and jutty his confounded base."

kerns (i. 2. 13; v. 7. 17), light-armed Irish soldiers; from the Irish *ceatharnach*, soldier. The word is generally contemptuous; cf. *Richard II*, ii. 1. 156, "rough rug-headed kerns," and *2 Henry VI*, iii. 1. 367, "a shag-haired, crafty kern." It is explained in Coke *On Justinian*, 4 Inst. 358, "*kernes* sunt pedites qui iaculis utuntur."

lapp'd (i. 2. 54), wrapped up, clad; cf. *Cymbeline*, v. 5. 360, "Lapped in a most curious mantle."

latch (iv. 3. 195), catch, seize; M. E. *lacchen*, A. S. *læccan:* so "a latch" is the "catch" or fastening of a door. The word is used, in slightly different senses, in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2. 36, and *Sonnet*, ciii.

lavish (i. 2. 57), unrestrained.

limbeck (i. 7. 67), alembic, still; a term of Arabian alchemy, for the vessel in which chemicals were vaporized.

line (i. 3. 112), fill, supply; with food, as in *As you Like It*, ii. 7. 154, "with good capon lined"; or with money, as in *Cymbeline*, ii. 3. 72, "If I do line one of their hands."

lodge (iv. 1. 55), beat down, lay. Cf. *Richard II*, iii. 3, 162. "Our sighs and they shall lodge the summer's corn."

loon (v. 3. 11), an expression of contempt. The word may be lit. "slow, awkward," and be akin to *lame*, or it may be a corruption of *loom*, the name of a diving-bird, and so be parallel to *booby*, *goose*, *gull*, *owl*. (Skeat.)

luxurious (iv. 3. 58), lustful.

magot-pie (iii. 4. 125), magpie. *Mag* or *Magot* is for the Fr. *Margot, Marguerite; pie*, Fr. *pie*, is the Lat. *pica*, magpie.

martlet (i. 6. 4), martin; M. E. *martinet*, corruption of *martinet*, dim. of Fr. *martin*. *Martlet* is the usual heraldic term for the bird. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 9. 28—

"like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall."

mate (v. 1. 86), subdue, confound, a term of chess, originally derived from the Arabic; thus *checkmate* is *shâh mât*, "the king is dead." Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 509. "Her more than haste is mated with delays"; *Comedy of Errors*, v. 281, "I think you are all mated or stark mad."

maw (iv. i. 23), stomach.

metaphysical (i. 5. 30), supernatural.

mettle (i. 7. 73), substance, temper; another form of *metal:* no distinction is made between the two words in old editions, either in spelling or in use. (Schmidt.)

minion (i. 2. 19; ii. 4. 15), favorite; Fr. *mignon*, dainty, pleasing.

modern (iv. 3. 170), commonplace, trite; cf. *As You Like It*, ii. 7. 156, "wise saws and modern instances." The word seems to have a sense akin to that of *moderate*, *i. e.* "keeping within measure." The present sense of it is rather "modish" "in the mode, or fashion."

monkey (iv. 2. 59), a term of endearment for a child. The nearest parallel is *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 1. 16, where Mercutio says of Romeo, "The ape is dead and I must conjure him." In *The Tempest*, iii. 2. 52, *monkey* is a term of reproach, used by Caliban to Ariel.

mortal (iii. 4. 81; iv. 3. 3), death-dealing.

nave (i. 2. 22), navel.

nice (iv. 3. 174), elaborate.

nightgown (ii. 2. 70; v. 1. 5), dressing-gown.

nonpareil (iii. 4. 19), one who has no equal; Fr. *non*, not; *pareil*, equal.

note: (1) (iii. 2. 44; v. 7. 21), distinction; (2) (iii. 3. 10), list, memorandum.

notion (iii. 1. 83), mind; cf. *Lear*, i. 4. 248, "His notion weakens, his discernings are lethargied."

owe: (1) (v. 4. 18), owe as a debt; (2) (i. 4. 10; v. 4. 18), a shorter form of *own* (*ow-e-n*).

paddock (i. 1. 9), toad; so in *Hamlet*, iii. 4. 190. The word is also used in various parts of England for a frog.

pall (i. 5. 52), wrap up.

palter (v. 8. 20), equivocate.

patch (v. 3. 15), fool; so called from the motley dress of the professional fool: cf. *The Tempest*, iii. 2. 71, "What a pied ninny's this! thou scurvy patch"; and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iv. 1. 237, "Man is but a patched fool."

peak (i. 3. 23), grow thin.

pester (v. 2. 23), annoy.

point (iv. 3. 135), summit of perfection, in the phrase *at a point*, *i. e.* perfectly ready.

posset (ii. 2. 6), a hot thick drink, generally made of curdled milk; the phrase "eat a posset" occurs in *Merry Wives*, v. 5. 180.

poster (i. 3. 33), speedy traveller; *post* is the common form; lit. one who takes relays of horses at every post.

power (v. 2. 1; 6. 7), armed force.

present (i. 2. 64), immediate.

profound (iii. 5. 24), either "deep," "heavy," or "full of occult properties;" cf. *As You Like It*, v. 2. 67, "a magician most profound in his art, and yet not damnable."

proof (i. 2. 54), armour that has been proved or tested; cf. *Richard III*, v. 3. 218, "Ten thousand soldiers armed in proof." So *proof* comes to mean merely "strength": cf. *Richard II*, i. 3. 73, "Add proof unto mine armour with thy prayers"; *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 512, "Mars' armour, forged for proof eterne."

proper (iii. 4. 60), an ironical epithet; cf. *Much Ado*, iv. 1. 311, "Talk with a man out at a window! A proper saying!"

purveyor (i. 6. 22), a man sent before to prepare lodging and provision.

push (v. 3. 20), attack; cf. *Julius Cæsar*, v. 2. 5, "Sudden push gives them the overthrow"; *1 Henry IV*, iii. 2. 66, "Stand the push | of every beardless vain comparative."

quarry (iv. 3. 206), cf. i. 2. 14, note), a heap of dead game; Fr. *curée*, the entrails given to the hounds; a technical term of sport.

quell (i. 7. 72), victory.

ravel (ii. 2. 37), loosen; woven or twisted things are said to "ravel" when the strands part; cf. *Richard II*, iv. 1. 288, "Must I ravel out | my weaved up follies?"

ravin (ii. 4. 28), devour greedily; Fr. *ravine*, plunder, Lat. *rapina*. So the adj. **ravined** (iv. 1. 24), ravenous.

repeat (iv. 3. 112), tell.

ronyon (i. 3. 6), a term of abuse; lit. "scabby," "mangy," the Fr. *rogneux*; cf. *Merry Wives*, iv. 2. 195, "You baggage, you polecat, you ronyon." An adj. formed from the word occurs in *As You Like It*, ii. 2. 8, "the roynish clown."

rooky (iii. 2. 51), full of rooks.

rub (iii. 1. 134), roughness; lit. an inequality in the ground, on a bowling-green; cf. *Hamlet*, iii. 1. 65, "To sleep, perchance to dream; ay, there's the rub"; and for the literal sense, *Richard II*, iii. 4. 4—

> "'T will make me think the world is full of rubs,
> And that my fortune runs against the bias."

sag (v. 3. 10), sink down; from weakness, or an overload.

saucy: (1) (iii. 4. 25), unbounded; (2) (iii. 5. 3), impudent; lit. "pungent," from Lat. *salsus*, salt.

scotch (iii. 2. 13), cut, notch; as with a whip. The vb. *scutch* is "to dress flax, by beating it slightly"; cf. *Coriolanus*, iv. 5. 198, "He scotched him and notched him like a carbonado" (meat cut across for broiling). So the noun in *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 7. 10, "I have yet room for six scotches (wounds) more."

sear (v. 3. 23), sere, dry.

seeling (iii. 2. 46), blinding: a term of falconry; Fr. *siller* or *ciller*, Lat. *cilium*, eyelid. Hawks, were tamed by sewing up their eyes till they were tractable.

self, originally an adj. = "same" (connected with Germ. *selbe*). The word was added to the oblique cases of pronouns to identify the object with the subject. Thus "He killed himself" = "He killed him" (the *same* him). Shakespeare uses the word practically as an adjective, denoting all shades of reference to the subject. Thus *self-comparisons* (i. 2. 55), "comparisons between himself and his enemy"; "*Strange and self-abuse*" (iii. 4. 142); "abuse *of* self"; "*Self and violent hands*" (v. 8. 70), "hands laid on self." Cf. *Richard II*, iii. 2. 166, "Infusing him with self and vain conceit."

sennet (iii. 1. 11), a particular "call" or set of notes on the trumpet. The word is not used in the text of Shakespeare; it is also spelt *senet, synnet, cynet, signet, signate*.

sewer (i. 7. 1), an attendant at a meal who superintended the arrangement of the table, the seating of the guests, and the tasting and serving of the dishes. From Ang.-Fr. *asseour*, from Old Fr. *asseoir* (Lat. *assidēre*), to seat—New Eng. Dict.

shag-hair'd (iv. 2. 83), shaggy, rough-haired, coarse-haired. The word occurs again in *2 Henry VI*, iii. 1. 67.

shard-borne (cf. note on iii. 2. 42), borne on shards or scaly wing-cases. So in *Cymbeline*, iii. 3. 20, "the sharded beetle." *Shard* is

(1) "a wing-case," as in *Antony and Cleopatra*, iii. 2. 20, "They are his shards and he their beetle"; (2) "a fragment of pottery," as in *Hamlet*, v. 1. 254, "Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her." But see the New. Eng. Dict. for another less poetical explanation.

shough (iii. 1. 94), a species of dog; cf. Nash, *Lenten Stuff* (1599), "A trundle-tail, tyke, or shough or two." Pronounced *shock*.

sirrah (iii. 1. 45; iv. 2. 30), a term of contempt, said to be from Icel. *sira;* but in the 13th century it was in use as a variant of *sir*, from the Lat. *senior*. (Skeat.)

skirr (v. 3. 35), move rapidly, scour. Again in *Henry V*, iv. 7. 64.

slab (iv. 1. 32), thick.

sleave (ii. 2. 37), tangled, knotted silk, often called floss-silk: Scand. *slejf*, a knot of ribbon. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, v. 1. 35, "Thou idle immaterial skein of sleave-silk."

sliver (iv. 1. 28), break off (of twigs); cf. *Lear*, iv. 2. 34, "She that herself will sliver and disbranch | from her material sap." *Sliver* occurs as a subst. in *Hamlet*, iv. 7. 174, "The envious sliver broke."

solemn (iii. 1. 14), ceremonious.

sooth (v. 5. 40), truth.

state (iii. 4. 5) (1), a canopy; (2) as here, "a canopied chair"; cf. *Coriolanus*, v. 4. 22, "He sits in his state as a thing made for Alexander."

still (iii. 1. 22; v. 8. 14), constantly.

sudden (iv. 3. 59), passionate; cf. *Othello*, ii. 1. 279, "He is rash and very sudden in choler."

surcease (i. 7. 4), stop, a euphemism for "death"; so the vb. in *Lucrece*, 1766, "If they surcease be that should survive."

swelter (iv. 1. 8), exude.

thane (i. 2. 45, &c.), lord; = *thegn*, a Saxon title of honor.

top (iv. 3. 57), surpass.

trains (iv. 3. 118), tricks. The vb. is frequently so used; *e.g.* in *Comedy of Errors*, iii. 2. 45, "Train me with thy note, to drown me."

trammel (i. 7. 3), either "catch" or "clog"; *trammel* is both a net for small birds, and a strap or rope fastening a horse's legs together.

unrough (v. 2. 10), beardless.

use (i. 3. 137), habit.

utterance (iii. 1. 72), extremity; Fr. *outrance*. A combat *a l'outrance* was one which only ended with the death of one of the parties.

vizard (iii. 2. 34), mask.

warranted (iv. 3. 137), justified.

wassail (i. 7. 64), revelry; A. S. *waes hael*, "be of health"; cf. *Hamlet*, i. 4. 9, "takes his rouse, keeps wassail."

water-rugs (iii. 1. 93), rough-haired water-dogs. *Rug* is connected etymologically with *rough*.

weal (iii. 4. 76; v. 2. 27), state.

weird (i. 3. 32, &c.), connected with fate; A. S. *wyrd*, destiny, *weorthan*, become, happen.

worm (iii. 4. 29), serpent; especially one of small size; so in *Antony and Cleopatra*, v. 2. 242, an asp is called "the pretty worm of Nilus."

wrack (v. 5. 51), wreck; always so spelt in the Qq. and Ff.

yawning (iii. 2. 43), sleepy; cf. *Henry V*, i. 2. 204, "the lazy, yawning drone."

yesty (iv. 1. 53), frothy; so the noun *yest* in *Winter's Tale*, iii. 3. 94, "the ship . . . anon swallowed with yest and froth."

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THE ARDEN SHAKESPEARE

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KING LEAR

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EDINBURGH

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ERNEST BERNBAUM

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

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Printed in the United States of America

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INTRODUCTION

1. LITERARY HISTORY OF THE PLAY

Two quarto editions of *King Lear* bear the date 1608. Their relationship and order of publication were long doubtful, but it is now certain that the earlier is that which bears the following title-page:

M. William Shak-speare: | His | True Chronicle Historie of the life and | death of King Lear and his three | Daughters. | *With the vnfortunate life of* Edgar, *sonne* | and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his | sullen and assumed humor of | Tom of Bedlam: | *As it was played before the Kings Maiestie at Whitehall vpon* | S. Stephans *night in Christmas Hollidayes.* | By his Maiesties seruants playing vsually at the Gloabe | on the Bancke-side, | London. | Printed for *Nathaniel Butter*, and are to be sold at his shop in *Pauls* | Church-yard at the signe of the Pide Bull neere | St. *Austins* Gate. 1608.

This edition was, as usual, authorized neither by Shakespeare nor by the theatrical company for which he wrote. Probably it was based upon a surreptitious stenographic report of a performance; and it is to be regarded as a carelessly printed issue of *King Lear* in approximately the form in which the play was at first acted.

The Second Quarto has the same title, except that it omits the words from "and are to be sold" to "St. *Austins* Gate." The date 1608 is fraudulent, for this edition was not issued until 1619. It was based upon the First Quarto, many of the faults of which it reproduced and aggravated; and it is useless in determining the true text of *King Lear*.[1]

The next edition of the play was that in the Folio of 1623. It is the most valuable, for it appears to have been taken from an acting copy preserved at the theatre. The independent origin of

[1] The relationship of the Quartos was first established by the Cambridge editors, though the editor of *King Lear . . . collated with the old and modern editions*, published in 1770, had already concluded that the so-called Pide Bull edition was the first. See also Mr. P. A. Daniel's introduction to the facsimile reprints of the two Quartos (1885). Mr. A. W. Pollard and Mr. W. W. Greg have shown that the Second Quarto was issued in 1619. Another Quarto, a careless reprint of the second, was "printed by Jane Bell" in 1655.

the Folio and Quarto texts gives rise to marked divergences. Apart from verbal variations, there is considerable difference in the length of the versions. The Quartos contain about three hundred lines that are not given in the Folio, and on the other hand about a hundred and ten lines in the Folio are omitted in the Quartos.[1] These omissions cannot definitely be explained; but it is probable that the divergences are due to the actors and printers. The First Quarto may follow a slightly condensed copy used in the performance at court in 1606, while the Folio gives the more abridged acting copy of the theatre. The bibliographical difficulties are further complicated by the fact that, though the two editions are based on different texts, the Folio reproduces some of the errors of the Quartos. The explanation of this would seem to be that the printer of the Folio did not work directly on the acting copy, but employed an edition of the First Quarto that had been corrected roughly in accordance with the manuscript. The modern text is considerably longer than that of the original editions by the inclusion of all the passages that occur only in one or the other of them. On the assumption that Shakespeare took no further care of the play after he had given it to the actors, the *King Lear* which we now have is a nearer approach to what it was when it left his hands.

King Lear is one of the Shakespearean plays which were mangled at the Restoration. It appears to have been acted "as Shakespeare wrote it" between 1662 and 1665, and again in 1671 or 1672,[2] but it was more popular in the adapted version of Nahum Tate, which was produced and published in 1681.[3] Tate considered the play "a heap of jewels, unstrung and unpolished," and he set himself to give it what Restoration taste demanded. "'Twas my good fortune," he says, "to light on one expedient to rectify what was wanting in the regularity and probability of the tale, which was to run through the whole a Love betwixt Edgar and Cordelia, that never changed word with each other in the original. This renders Cordelia's indifference and her father's passion in the first scene prob-

[1] The chief passages omitted in the Quartos are: i. 1. 41–46; i. 2. 118–124, 181–187; i. 4. 345–356; ii. 4. 46–55, 142–147; iii. 1. 22–29; iii. 2. 80–95; iii. 6. 13–15; iv. 1. 6–9; iv. 6. 169–174. The chief passages omitted in the Folios are: i. 2. 156–163; i. 3. 16–20; i. 4. 154–169; ii. 2. 148–152; iii. 1. 7–15, 30–42; iii. 6. 18–58, 103–122; iii. 7. 99–107; iv. 2. 31–50, 53–59, 62–69; iv. 3. (the whole scene); iv. 7. 85–97; v. 3. 204–221. It is sometimes stated erroneously that only about fifty lines are omitted in the Quartos, and about two hundred and twenty in the Folios.

[2] See Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus* (ed. Davies, 1789), pp. 36 and 43.

[3] *The History of King Lear. Acted at the Duke's Theatre. Reviv'd with Alterations. By N. Tate. London, 1681.* Reprinted 1771.

able. It likewise gives countenance to Edgar's disguise, making that a generous design that was before a poor shift to save his life. The distress of the story is evidently heightened by it; and it particularly gave occasion of a new scene or two, of more success (perhaps) than merit. This method necessarily threw me on making the tale conclude in a success to the innocent distrest Persons. . . . Yet I was wracked with no small fears for so bold a change, till I found it well received by my audience."

The love-making and betrothal of Edgar and Cordelia, the restoration of Lear to his kingdom, the enforced moral that "truth and virtue shall at last succeed," the interpolated scenes, and the entire omission of the Fool, make this version a perfect botch of the original. But it held the stage unchallenged till the time of Garrick, and its tinkerings were not totally discarded until well on in the nineteenth century. Garrick's version, which was produced in 1756, was generally accepted for about fifty years.[1] With all his enthusiasm for Shakespeare, Garrick showed little regard for the plays as Shakespeare left them, and of none did he represent a more garbled version than of *King Lear*. It may not unfitly be described as an adaptation of Tate's. He restored certain passages and omitted many of Tate's additions, but he retained the love scenes and the happy ending, and after serious consideration decided that he could not include the Fool. The version that Colman produced in 1768 was a decided improvement. He endeavored in it, he says, "to purge the tragedy of *Lear* of the alloy of Tate, which has so long been suffered to debase it." He had the taste to recognize that the love scenes between Edgar and Cordelia were entirely out of place, and that, far from heightening the distress of the story, as Tate had asserted, they diffused a languor over all the scenes from which Lear is absent. But he did not condemn Tate entirely. "To reconcile," he says, "the catastrophe of Tate to the original story was the first grand object which I proposed to myself in this alteration." He thus expelled Tate from the first four acts, but retained him in the fifth; but, like Tate and Garrick, he would have none of the Fool, being "convinced that such a character in a tragedy would not be endured on the modern stage." Colman's version, however, was not popular because of the absence of the love scenes, and Garrick's or Tate's kept possession of the stage.[2]

[1] The version of 1756 was not printed, but it is presumably the same as that published by Bell in 1772 or 1773.

[2] See Genest, *English Stage*, iv. 475; v. 191–203; viii. 131. Another version was produced by Kemble in 1809, but it was worse than Garrick's, for Kemble restored passages from Tate that Garrick had omitted.

Throughout the eighteenth century the happy ending, though invariably adopted by the actors, was a moot point of the critics. Addison condemned it and the "ridiculous doctrine" of poetical justice urged in its defense. "*King Lear* is an admirable tragedy," he says, "as Shakespeare wrote it; but as it is reformed according to the chimerical notion of poetical justice, in my humble opinion it has lost half its beauty."[1] Johnson was of the opposite opinion, and represents the prevailing taste of the time when he states with evident satisfaction that "Cordelia, from the time of Tate, has always retired with victory and felicity."

The new school of Shakespearean critics at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and particularly Lamb and Hazlitt, induced Kean to abandon the inartistic conclusion that had been in vogue for over a hundred and forty years. In 1820 he had followed Tate's version, but he had declared that "the London audience have no notion what I can do until they see me over the dead body of Cordelia," and in 1823, in obedience to his dramatic instincts and "the suggestion of men of literary eminence from the time of Addison," he gave the last act as originally written by Shakespeare. But even Kean did not restore the true version in the rest of the play, for Tate's love scenes were retained and the Fool was still excluded. Not till Macready's performance of the play in 1838 was the Fool again permitted to appear. But even in making this restoration Macready had considerable misgivings. "My opinion of the introduction of the Fool," he wrote in his diary, "is that, like many such terrible contrasts in poetry and painting, in acting-representation it will fail in effect; it will either weary, or annoy, or distract the spectator. I have no hope of it, and think that at the last we shall be obliged to dispense with it." Though he doubted the propriety of this part, he has the credit of restoring to the stage the true *King Lear*.

2. THE DATE OF THE PLAY

The date of *King Lear* is not definitely known; but it is certain that the play was written between 1603 and 1606. The later limit is fixed by external evidence. The First Quarto was entered in the Stationers' Registers under the date November 26, 1607, as "A Booke called Master William Shakespeare his 'historye of Kinge Lear' as yt was played before the kinges maiestie at Whitehall vppon Sainct Stephens night at Christmas Last." The performance at

[1] *Spectator*, No. 40.

court must therefore have taken place on St. Stephen's night (December 26), 1606. This is the only piece of external evidence that bears on the date of the play.

But there is internal evidence to show that *King Lear* was not written before 1603. As the notes point out, there are several passages that prove Shakespeare's knowledge of Harsnet's *Declaration of Egregious Popishe Impostures*. The names of the devils mentioned by Edgar when feigning madness are undoubtedly borrowed from this book,[1] while certain other remarks made by him in his rôle of Tom of Bedlam point to a like indebtedness.[2] Harsnet's book was entered in the Stationers' Registers on March 16, 1603, and appeared later in the same year.

Unfortunately this is the only evidence that is at all definite. It is highly probable that the play was written in 1606, though the arguments urged in support of a date nearer the end than the beginning of the period from 1603 to Christmas, 1606, are not conclusive. Some students would assign *King Lear* to 1605 because they surmise that the publication in that year of an old play on the same subject (*The True Chronicle History of King Leir*) was caused by the successful appearance of Shakespeare's version on the stage. Malone notes that in iii. 4. 189 Edgar says "I smell the blood of a *British* man," and he argues therefrom that this must have been written after James's proclamation as King of Great Britain on October 24, 1604. But it has been pointed out that as early as 1603, even before James's arrival in London, the poet Daniel addressed to him a *Panegyrike Congratulatory*, which has the lines:

> "Shake hands with union, O thou mightie state,
> Now thou art all Great Britain, and no more,
> No Scot, no English now, nor no debate."

His argument, therefore, has little value.

More weight attaches to the plea put forward by Mr. Aldis Wright, for, though it does not force acceptance, it strengthens the supposition of a late date. In the second scene of the first act there are references to "these late eclipses in the sun and moon." In October, 1605, there was a great eclipse of the sun following an eclipse of the moon in the previous month, and Mr. Wright argues that "it can scarcely be doubted that Shakespeare had in his mind the great eclipse, and that *Lear* was written while the recollection of it was still fresh, and while the ephemeral literature of the day

[1] See iii. 4. 120; iii. 6. 7, 31; and iv. 1. 62.
[2] See ii. 3. 20; iii. 4. 51; and iv. 1. 54.

abounded with pamphlets foreboding the consequences that were to follow." [1] Similarly, he hazards the further plausible suggestion that the reference in the same scene to "machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders" may have been prompted by the Gunpowder Plot of November 5, 1605. All this, however, is mere supposition. There were eclipses of the sun and moon in 1598 and again in 1601,[2] and it is not impossible that Shakespeare's words were suggested by a recollection of them. None the less, the trend of the arguments, though inconclusive in themselves, is to support the date 1606; and as *King Lear* was acted before James at Christmas, 1606, and as the plays represented at court were usually new plays. that date may be accepted.[3]

3. THE SOURCES OF THE PLOT

The story of King Lear was familiar in various forms to the Elizabethans. From the twelfth to the sixteenth century it had been told again and again in chronicles and romances, both French and English.[4] It is first found in the *Historia Britonum* of Geoffrey of Monmouth, written in Latin about 1135. Geoffrey attached an immemorially old folk tale about a father and three daughters to a mythical British king, to whom he gave the name of a Celtic sea-god, Leir. From Geoffrey the story passed into Wace's French poem, *Brut* (c. 1155), and thence into Layamon's *Brut* (c. 1200), where the story is first given in English. Thereafter it is told in the metrical chronicles of Robert of Gloucester (c. 1300), Robert Manning (c. 1338), and John Harding (c. 1450), and in the more detailed prose chronicles of Robert Fabyan (1516), John Rastell (*The Pastime of the People*, 1530), Richard Grafton (1568), and Raphael Holinshed (1577), while a similar story is given in Camden's *Remains* (1605). Two versions of it occur in translations of the *Gesta Romanorum*, the great mediæval storehouse of legendary tales. And it found a poetical setting in Elizabethan literature in John Higgins's contribution to *The Mirror for Magistrates* (1574), in Warner's *Albion's England* (1586, ch. 14), and in Spenser's *Faërie*

[1] Preface to the *Clarendon Press* edition, p. xvi.

[2] See *King Lear*, ed. W. J. Craig (1901), p. xxiii.

[3] The metrical evidence affords little or no assistance. For a statement of the metrical characteristics, see Fleay's *Shakespeare Manual*, p. 136, and Prof. Ingram's paper on "Light and Weak Endings" in the *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1874, pt. ii. Cf. Table I in chapter iv of W. A. Neilson and A. H. Thorndike's *The Facts about Shakespeare* (1913).

[4] See Wilfred Perrett, *The Story of King Lear*, Berlin, 1904.

Queene (1590, Book ii, canto x). Including the early play entitled *The True Chronicle History of King Leir*, which appeared in 1605,[1] there are extant at least eight Elizabethan versions of earlier date than the drama by which it has been immortalized.

Of the contemporary versions Shakespeare may have known those in Holinshed's *Chronicle*, *The Mirror for Magistrates*, and the *Faërie Queene*,[2] as well as the early play.

Holinshed's *Chronicle* was the great source of Shakespeare's histories. Certain passages in some of them, *e.g. Henry V* and *Henry VIII*, are little more than versified renderings of Holinshed's prose. But the fact that it provided so much material for Shakespeare's other plays has led to overstatement of its influence on *King Lear*. In Holinshed's account Leir loves Cordeilla far above her two elder sisters, and intends her to succeed to his kingdom; but, being displeased with her answer at the love-test, he determines that his land shall be divided after his death between Gonorilla and Regan (who so far were unmarried), and that a half thereof shall immediately be assigned them, while to Cordeilla he reserves nothing. But in time the two dukes whom the two eldest daughters had married rise against Leir and deprive him of the government, assigning him a portion on which to live. The daughters, however, seem to think that whatever the father has is too much, and gradually curtail his retinue. Leir is constrained to flee the country and seek comfort of Cordeilla, who has married a prince of Gallia. In Gallia he is honored as if he were king of the whole country. Cordeilla and her husband then raise a mighty army, cross over to Britain with Leir, and defeat the forces of Gonorilla and Regan. Leir is restored and rules for two years, and is succeeded by Cordeilla. It will be seen that Holinshed's story, meager as it is, differs in many points from Shakespeare's. It was certainly not used as the basis of *King Lear*. Indeed there is absolutely nothing to prove

[1] There is entered in the Registers of the Stationers' Company, under the date May 14, 1594, *The moste famous Chronicle historye of Leire kinge of England and his Three Daughters*. No copy of this is known, but it is probably the same as *The Tragecall historie of kinge Leir and his Three Daughters*, which was entered on May 8, 1605, and appeared in the same year with the following title, *The True Chronicle History of King Leir and his three Daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordella. As it hath bene diuers and sundry times lately acted.* This is reprinted in George Steevens' *Six Old Plays* (1779), vol. ii; in W. C. Hazlitt's *Shakespeare's Library* (1875), pt. ii, vol. ii; by W. W. Greg for the Malone Society (1907); and by Sidney Lee in the *Shakespeare Classics* (1909). An abstract is given in Furness's *Variorum Shakespeare*. See R. A. Law's "The Date of King Lear" in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, vol. xxi.

[2] These three versions are reprinted in Appendix A.

that Shakespeare consulted it, though the probability is, considering his use of other parts of the *Chronicle*, that he had read Holinshed's version.

The story in *The Mirror for Magistrates* has more points of similarity. According to it, Leire intended "to guerdon most where favour most he found" (cf. i. 1. 53–54); and Cordell in her reply refers to the chance of bearing another more good-will, meaning a future husband (cf. i. 1. 103–104). Leire does not resign the government at once, but is deprived of his crown and right by the husbands of Gonerell and Ragan, who promise him a guard of sixty knights. This number Gonerell reduces by half, whereupon Leire goes to Cornwall to stay with Ragan, who after a time takes away all his retinue but ten, then allows him but five, and finally but one. Another indignity he has to suffer is that "the meaner upstart courtiers think themselves his mates." And his daughters call him a "doting fool." As in Holinshed, Leire flees to France, returns with Cordell and an army which proves victorious, and is restored to his kingdom. But, generally, this account bears a much closer resemblance than Holinshed's to the story of *King Lear*. Some of the details of *The Mirror for Magistrates* are paralleled in Shakespeare's play.[1] This, however, is a circumstance on which too great stress is apt to be laid, for similarity or even identity of idea does not prove indebtedness. The most striking point is Cordell's allusion in the love-test to her future husband. But it happens that in Camden's *Remains* a similar story of the love-test is told of Ina, king of the West Saxons, and there the youngest daughter replies to her father "flatly, without flattery, that albeit she did love, honour, and reverence him, and so would whilst she lived, as much as nature and daughterly duty at the uttermost could expect, yet she did think that one day it would come to pass that she should affect another more fervently, meaning her husband, when she were married." Malone, who drew attention to this passage, thinks that Shakespeare had it in his thoughts rather than the lines in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, as Camden's book had recently been published, and as a portion near at hand "furnished him with a hint in *Coriolanus*." No definite opinion can be advanced; but the effect is only to render Shakespeare's debt to *The Mirror for Magistrates* more doubtful.

In one striking point Shakespeare is indebted to Spenser. In

[1] Perhaps the parallelisms are due to the intermediary of the early play, which resembles in several points the story in *The Mirror for Magistrates*. There would be less difficulty in showing the early dramatist's acquaintance with it than there is in showing Shakespeare's.

Holinshed's *Chronicle* the heroine's name is Cordeilla, in *The Mirror for Magistrates* it is Cordell, and in the early play it is Cordella; in *King Lear* the name has the beautiful form first adopted in the *Faërie Queene*.[1] The two great Elizabethans are alike also in their division of Lear's kingdom, for neither makes Lear reserve to himself any share in the government, while in Holinshed and in *The Mirror for Magistrates* the two elder daughters are not given at once their full share, and wrest the supreme power by force of arms. Shakespeare is sometimes said to be indebted to the simile[2] in Spenser's account; but this is a point that cannot be pressed.

We are on surer ground in dealing with the early play, the anonymous *True Chronicle History of King Leir*. The main incidents of this drama, and in particular some of its deviations from the usual story, have their counterpart in *King Lear*. In one of his snatches of song, Shakespeare's fool speaks of "That lord that counsell'd thee to give away thy land" (i. 4. 154–155). There is nothing in the rest of the play to explain the allusion; but we find that in the old play the love-test is proposed by a courtier, Skalliger by name, and that Lear at once resigns his whole kingdom to Gonorill and Ragan. Another courtier, Perillus, who is entirely the early dramatist's own invention, is the prototype of Kent. He pleads for Cordella, but in vain, and afterwards, with Kent's fidelity, attends in disguise on the old king. A messenger, and the miscarriage of letters, play an important part in the development of the plot. Again, in the pathetic scene in which Leir comes to recognize Cordella, he kneels to her (cf. iv. 7. 59). These are some of the most striking points of similarity in the development of the two plays. But indebtedness may be traced even in minor matters. We seem to catch an echo now and then of some of the statements and phrases of the old play. Thus:

> "I am as kind as is the pellican,
> That kils it selfe to save her young ones lives"

reminds us of Lear's reference to his "pelican daughters" (iii. 4. 77). The allusion to Gonorill's "young bones" —

> "poore soule, she breeds yong bones,
> And that is it makes her so tutchy sure" —

suggests ii. 4. 165, while the sentiment is the same as that expressed in ii. 4. 107–113. It is probable, too, that Perillus's description of

[1] Spenser once has the form "Cordeill," apparently shortened from Holinshed's "Cordeilla." It would appear that the exigencies of metre suggested "Cordelia." Spenser was undoubtedly indebted to Holinshed for the story.

[2] See i. 4. 237.

his master as "the mirror of mild patience" had some bearing on the finer phrase which Shakespeare puts in the mouth of Lear himself, "the pattern of all patience" (iii. 2. 37). There can be no doubt that Shakespeare knew this early play. In itself it is of little account; and yet there are not wanting qualities which show that the story only awaited the master hand to touch it to finer issues.

It is also certain that Sidney's *Arcadia*[1] is the source of the Gloucester story — the underplot that is interwoven with marvellous skill and is so striking a foil to the main theme. The prototypes of Gloucester and Edgar are the "Paphlagonian unkind king and his kind son," whose "pitiful state" is recounted in the second book of Sidney's pastoral romance. Though the story is reproduced in all its essentials, it has furnished Shakespeare with nothing but the bare facts of his underplot.[2]

But when all Shakespeare's borrowings are put together — even though account be taken of those matters in which his debt is very doubtful — how small a part do they form of *King Lear!* The intermingling of the Gloucester episode has entailed new incidents and changed the working out of the catastrophe. The presence of Edmund enhances the villainy of Goneril and Regan, and their adulterous love leads to their deaths. In the older versions their part was ended with the victory of Lear. Shakespeare alone has given a sad ending to the play; and although, as we have seen, he incurred thereby the censure of eighteenth century critics and actors, it is the only ending that is artistically possible. That Lear should be restored and reign happily is fitting enough in the meager stories of Holinshed or the early dramatist, but the tragic intensity which Shakespeare could give the more easily by the addition of the Gloucester episode makes any other ending than his lame and inept. There is no borrowing in the feigned madness of Edgar, nor in the real madness of Lear — the central circumstance, the very essence of the play; and the character of the Fool is Shakespeare's creation. In these points, as in all that gives the play its value, the only "source" is Shakespeare himself. In addition there is the whole setting, and in particular the storm which symbolizes the "great

[1] The passage from which Shakespeare borrowed is reprinted in Appendix A.

[2] Some of the older critics, *e.g.* Johnson and Hazlitt, thought that the play was "founded upon an old ballad," *A Lamentable Song of the Death of King Leare and his Three Daughters.* But this is apparently of later date than Shakespeare's play. It was published, probably for the first time, in Richard Johnson's *Golden Garlands of Princely Pleasures and Delicate Delights* (1620), and has been reprinted in Wilfrid Perrett's *The Story of King Lear* (1904), pp. 125–142.

commotion in the moral world"; and there is the characterization, by which the shadows and puppets of the early stories are turned into flesh and blood.

4. CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The play of *King Lear* presents certain peculiarities in point of structure. It diverges considerably from the form of the Shakespearean dramas with which it is generally associated — *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth* — and it is even more irregular than the first of these. It is unique in the importance of the opening scene. There is no introductory passage to explain or throw light on the story that is to be unfolded, or, as in *Macbeth*, to symbolize it. We are introduced straightway to the action on which the whole play depends. The first scene on this account has been stigmatized by Goethe as irrational; but the structure of the play emphasizes the fact that the deeds which call the play into being are in themselves of little importance. *King Lear* recounts the consequences following inevitably on a rash and foolish act. Another arrangement of the opening scenes would have tended to give more prominence than the theme of the drama allowed to an act which is important only in so far as it is the occasion of others.

The importance of the underplot is the most notable point in the structure of *King Lear*. Its bearing on the whole play seems almost to mark it out as a survival of the discarded parallelisms of the earlier comedies. But it has a purely artistic value, for it is added not in order to complicate the story, but to enforce its motive. It is in fact a triumphant vindication of the underplot, a characteristic of the romantic drama on which the formal classical critics looked askance. The Gloucester story has had its full share of condemnation by those who are prejudiced by recognized dramatic rules. Joseph Warton, for instance, singled out, as one of the "considerable imperfections" with which the play is chargeable, "the plot of Edmund against his brother, which distracts the attention and destroys the unity of the fable." [1] His other observations on *King Lear* contain passages of wholehearted and eloquent praise, but on this point he was so blinded by the prevailing classicism of the eighteenth century as to fail to recognize that the underplot, far from distracting the attention, really adds to the intensity. Such objections have been answered once and for all in a memorable

[1] *The Adventurer*, No. 122, January 5, 1754, Warton's third and concluding paper of "Observations on *King Lear*."

passage by Schlegel. "The incorporation of the two stories has been censured as destructive of the unity of action. But whatever contributes to the intrigue of the *dénouement* must always possess unity.' And with what ingenuity and skill are the two main parts of the composition dovetailed into one another! The pity felt by Gloucester for the fate of Lear becomes the means which enables his son Edmund to effect his complete destruction, and affords the outcast Edgar an opportunity of being the saviour of his father. On the other hand, Edmund is active in the cause of Regan and Goneril, and the criminal passion which they both entertain for him induces them to execute justice on each other and on themselves. The laws of the drama have therefore been sufficiently complied with; but that is the least. It is the very combination which constitutes the sublime beauty of the work. The two cases resemble each other in the main: an infatuated father is blind towards his well-disposed child, and the unnatural children, whom he prefers, requite him by the ruin of all his happiness. But all the circumstances are so different that these stories, while they each make a correspondent impression on the heart, form a complete contrast for the imagination. Were Lear alone to suffer from his daughters, the impression would be limited to the powerful compassion felt by us for his private misfortune. But two such unheard-of examples taking place at the same time have the appearance of a great commotion in the moral world." [1] The story of the victim of his own misdeeds is so skillfully interwoven with the story of the victim of his indiscretions, and is brought into so suggestive opposition, that the effect of each is more impressive. The Gloucester story in itself does not offer any striking chance of successful dramatic treatment, and in respect to the feigned madness of Edgar it rather lends itself to comedy, but attains a tragic power by its association with the story of Lear. On the other hand, the main theme is raised by this conjunction above a purely personal matter, and we are the more readily brought to think of Lear, not as the man, but as the victim of filial ingratitude.

Despite these apparently discordant elements, *King Lear* has complete unity of spirit. But in achieving this unity the art of Shakespeare has nowhere triumphed more completely than in the case of the Fool. In less skillful hands his presence would have been inimical to the pity and terror of the tragedy. We have seen how actors, for a period of over a hundred and fifty years, from the

[1] A. W. Schlegel, *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* (English translation, 1879, p. 412).

days of Tate to Macready, banished the Fool from the stage because of their failure to recognize the importance of his part. Even in restoring him Macready did not do him justice, for he regarded him as a mere youth, and accordingly intrusted the part to an actress. The Fool's remarks are those of a man of full and rich experience of life. He is not a clown like Othello's servant, introduced merely for the sake of variety. He bears a much closer resemblance to the Fools of the later comedies, to Touchstone in *As You Like It* and Feste in *Twelfth Night*. Like Touchstone, "he uses his folly like a stalking-horse, and under the presentation of that he shoots his wit." At first there is a sharpness in his taunts, for he hopes thereby, with the frankness that is the privilege of his position, to awaken the king to a knowledge of what he has done. Afterward, when the worst has come to the worst, his wit has the gentler aim of relieving Lear's anguish. He no longer "teaches" Lear, but "labours to outjest his heart-struck injuries." He seems to give expression to the thought lurking deep in Lear's mind, as is shown by the readiness with which Lear catches at everything he says, or to voice the counsels of discretion. And he finally disappears from the play when Lear is mad. The Fool is, in fact, Lear's familiar spirit. He is Lear's only companion in the fateful step of going out into the night and braving the storm. Even then, as if in astonishment that his sorrows had not destroyed all his regard for others, Lear says, "I have one part in my heart that's sorry yet for thee." How, then, may it be asked, can the Fool possibly be omitted from *King Lear?*

Apart from this consideration, the Fool has an important function in the drama. The eighteenth century actors unconsciously testified to this, for when they banished the Fool as "a character not to be endured on the modern stage," they with one exception — and success did not attend this effort — made good the want by mawkish love scenes. These they preferred to a rôle that was regarded only as burlesque. But the artful prattle of the Fool does more than give variety and relax the strain on one's feelings. It makes Lear's lot endurable to us, but at the same time it gives us a keener sense of its sadness. The persistent reminders of Lear's folly, the recurring presentment of ideas in a new and stronger light, the caustic wit hidden in a seemingly casual remark, all bring home more forcibly the pity of Lear's plight. In a word, the Fool intensifies the pathos by relieving it.[1]

[1] In this connection it is well to record the opinion of Shelley, expressed in his *Defence of Poetry*: "The modern practice of blending comedy with tragedy,

The character of Lear is distinct from those of most of Shakespeare's heroes in that it is not revealed gradually. He is described fully in the very first scene. He has had a successful reign, but he is not a strong man. He is headstrong and rash, and old age has brought "unruly waywardness" and vanity. The play as a whole deals with the effects produced upon this passionate character by a foolish act for which he alone is responsible. The story is strictly that of a British king who began to rule "in the year of the world 3105, at what time Joas reigned in Juda." But Shakespeare has converted it into a tale of universal interest. He makes it but a basis for what Keats has called "the fierce dispute betwixt Hell torment and impassioned clay." [1] All the details of the story are of little importance in themselves, and the art of Shakespeare makes us forget them in thinking of the total effect to which they contribute. The real subject of the play is not so much Lear as the outraged passion of filial affection. "Nobody from reading Shakespeare," says Hazlitt, "would know (except from the *Dramatis Personæ*) that Lear was an English king. He is merely a king and a father. The ground is common: but what a well of tears has he dug out of it! There are no data in history to go upon; no advantage is taken of costume, no acquaintance with geography or architecture or dialect is necessary; but there is an old tradition, human nature, — an old temple, the human mind, — and Shakespeare walks into it and looks about him with a lordly eye, and seizes on the sacred spoils as his own. The story is a thousand or two years old, and yet the tragedy has no smack of antiquarianism in it." [2]

It is this universal quality which allows such anachronisms as that one character should personate a madman of the seventeenth century and speak a southwestern dialect, or that another should refer to the rules of chivalry. The very greatness of *King Lear*, the subordination and even abrogation of all detail, abundant though it is, made Charles Lamb declare the play essentially impossible to be represented on a stage. "The greatness of Lear," he says, "is not in corporal dimension, but in intellectual: the explo-

though liable to great abuse in point of practice, is undoubtedly an extension of the dramatic circle; but the comedy should be, as in *King Lear*, universal, ideal, sublime. It is perhaps the intervention of this principle which determines the balance in favour of *King Lear* against *Œdipus Tyrannus* or the *Agamemnon*. . . . *King Lear*, if it can sustain this comparison, may be judged to be the most perfect specimen of the dramatic art existing in the world, in spite of the narrow conditions to which the poet was subjected by the ignorance of the philosophy of the drama which has prevailed in modern Europe."

[1] *Sonnet written before re-reading "King Lear."*

[2] Hazlitt, "Scott, Racine, and Shakespeare," in *The Plain-Speaker*.

sions of his passion are terrible as a volcano: they are storms turning up and disclosing to the bottom that sea, his mind, with all its vast riches. It is his mind which is laid bare. This case of flesh and blood seems too insignificant to be thought on; even as he himself neglects it. On the stage we see nothing but corporal infirmities and weakness, the impotence of rage; while we read it, we see not Lear, but we are Lear."[1] His sufferings bring out good qualities that have been stunted in fortune. When we first know him he is so self-centred as to be absolutely regardless of others. But he comes to suspect his own "jealous curiosity" (i. 4. 75), tries to find an excuse for his enemies (ii. 4. 106–113), and is finally moved to contrition for his former indifference to the lot of even his meanest subjects (iii. 4. 28–36). He knows he must be patient. "You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need" (ii. 4. 274). He asserts that he will be "the pattern of all patience" (iii. 2. 37). But the blow has come too late. His fond old heart cannot endure the outrage of "the offices of nature, bond of childhood, effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude." He is too old to learn resignation. His remarks only increase in intensity. When he meets Regan after his rebuff by Goneril, he can greet her only by saying that if she is not glad to see him, her mother must have been an adulteress (ii. 4. 132–134). At last he becomes almost inarticulate with passion (ii. 4. 281–289). The strain is too great, and the bonds of reason snap. Of this the premonitions have been so skillfully given that his madness seems inevitable.[2] Yet he could never more truly say that he was "every inch a king" than when he threw aside the lendings of royalty and stood against the deep dread-bolted thunder, and defied the villainy of his unnatural daughters. If he baffles our sympathy or regard in the height of his fortune, he wins our reverence now; and the imagination fondly lingers over his recognition of Cordelia and his contentment with prison if only she is with him, and finds his early folly nobly expiated in his conduct at her death and his inability to live without her.[3]

Yet this ending, as beautiful as it is inevitable, has been con-

[1] Lamb, *On the Tragedies of Shakespeare.*

[2] Several accounts of the course of Lear's madness have been given by medical men. See, for example, Bucknill's *Mad Folk of Shakespeare*, pp.160–235.

[3] The *Œdipus Coloneus* of Sophocles offers a remarkable comparison with *King Lear*. Œdipus, too, is a man more sinned against than sinning (see note, iii. 2. 60), but he has learned patience and self control and has a strength of character wanting in the aged Lear. His curse on Polynices is even more terrible than Lear's on Goneril, because it is deliberate, and does not spring from a passionate desire for revenge. And Antigone is his Cordelia.

demned on the score of what is called "poetical justice." As Lear is a man more sinned against than sinning, some would have him restored to his kingdom. But crime is not the chief tragic motive in the Shakespearean drama any more than in that of Greece. Lear is guilty of an error, and through it he meets his fate. The play of *Macbeth* is an exception to the general rule, in that the tragedy is founded upon crime; on the other hand, Hamlet and Othello, for instance, resemble Lear in being the victims of their own character and the circumstances in which they are placed. Cordelia can well say, "we are not the first, Who with best meaning have incurred the worst." That she and Lear, after all that has happened, should not incur the worst would be contrary to the Shakespearean method, if only for the reason that it would be glaringly inartistic. Much as we regret Lear's fate, it alone can satisfy our sense of the fitness of things. As Charles Lamb has put it with admirable force: "A happy ending! — as if the living martyrdom that Lear had gone through, the flaying of his feelings alive, did not make a fair dismissal from the stage of life the only decorous thing for him. If he is to live and be happy after, if he could sustain this world's burden after, why all this pudder and preparation, why torment us with all this unnecessary sympathy? As if the childish pleasure of getting his gilt robes and sceptre again could tempt him to act over again his misused station, — as if at his years, and with his experience, anything was left but to die." But, it may be asked, does this ending, which is in accordance with artistic necessity, entirely fail to satisfy the claims of poetical justice? Lear is not troubled by the loss of his kingdom. Why, then, should his kingdom be restored to him, the more especially as he had in his sane mind given it away? What he feels is not the actual diminution of his train by his daughters and their other unkindnesses so much as the brutality which prompted these acts. Justice can be done him, not by restoration to his kingdom, but by restoration to filial respect, and it is satisfied by the love of Cordelia. This alone "does redeem all sorrows that ever I have felt."

KING LEAR

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

LEAR . . . . . King of Britain
KING OF FRANCE
DUKE OF BURGUNDY
DUKE OF CORNWALL
DUKE OF ALBANY
EARL OF KENT
EARL OF GLOUCESTER
EDGAR . . . . . Son to Gloucester
EDMUND . . . . . Bastard Son to Gloucester
CURAN . . . . . A courtier
Old Man . . . . . Tenant to Gloucester
Doctor
Fool
OSWALD . . . . . Steward to Goneril
A Captain employed by Edmund
Gentleman attendant on Cordelia
A Herald
Servants to Cornwall
GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA . . . . . Daughters to Lear

Knights of Lear's train, Captains, Messengers,
Soldiers, and Attendants

SCENE — BRITAIN

KING LEAR

ACT I

SCENE I — *King Lear's palace*

Enter KENT, GLOUCESTER, *and* EDMUND

Kent. I thought the king had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Glou. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for equalities are so weighed, that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glou. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to it.

Kent. I cannot conceive you.

Glou. Sir, this young fellow's mother could: whereupon she grew round-wombed, and had, indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

Glou. But I have, sir, a son by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent

for, yet was his mother fair; there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged. Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edm. No, my lord.

Glou. My lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Glou. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again. The king is coming.

Sennet. *Enter* King Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia, *and* Attendants

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.

Glou. I shall, my liege.

[*Exeunt Gloucester and Edmund.*

Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.
Give me the map there. Know that we have divided
In three our kingdom: and 't is our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age;
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburthen'd crawl toward death. Our son of Cornwall,
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife

May be prevented now. The princes, France and
Burgundy,
Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, my
daughters, —
Since now we will divest us, both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state, —
Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge. Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.

Gon. Sir, I love you more than words can wield
the matter;
Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty,
honour;
As much as child e'er loved, or father found;
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cor. [*Aside*] What shall Cordelia do? Love,
and be silent.

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line
to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady: to thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

Reg. Sir, I am made
Of the self-same metal that my sister is,

And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short: that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys,
Which the most precious square of sense possesses;
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness' love.

Cor. [*Aside*] Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's
More ponderous than my tongue.

Lear. To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Goneril. Now, our joy,
Although the last, not least; to whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interess'd, what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

Cor. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing!

Cor. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.

Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty
According to my bond; nor more nor less.

Lear. How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.

Cor. Good, my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, loved me: I
Return those duties back as are right fit,

Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

Lear. But goes thy heart with this?

Cor. Ay, good my lord.

Lear. So young, and so untender?

Cor. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so; thy truth, then, be thy dower:
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night;
By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist and cease to be;
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and relieved,
As thou my sometime daughter.

Kent. Good my liege, —

Lear. Peace, Kent!
Come not between the dragon and his wrath.
I loved her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery. Hence, and avoid my sight!

So be my grave my peace, as here I give
Her father's heart from her! Call France; who stirs?
Call Burgundy. Cornwall and Albany,
With my two daughters' dowers digest this third:
Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
I do invest you jointly with my power,
Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
That troop with majesty. Ourself, by monthly course,
With reservation of an hundred knights,
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain
The name, and all the additions to a king;
The sway, revenue, execution of the rest,
Beloved sons, be yours: which to confirm,
This coronet part betwixt you. [*Giving the crown.*
Kent. Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
Loved as my father, as my master follow'd,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers, —
Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from the shaft.
Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly,
When Lear is mad. What wilt thou do, old man?
Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak,
When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's bound,
When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom,
And, in thy best consideration, check

This hideous rashness: answer my life my judgement,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least;
Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound
Reverbs no hollowness.
Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.
Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thy enemies; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.
Lear. Out of my sight!
Kent. See better, Lear; and let me still remain
The true blank of thine eye.
Lear. Now, by Apollo, —
Kent. Now, by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.
Lear. O, vassal! miscreant!
[*Laying his hand on his sword.*
Alb. } Dear sir, forbear.
Corn. }
Kent. Do;
Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon thy foul disease. Revoke thy doom;
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.
Lear. Hear me, recreant!
On thine allegiance, hear me!
Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,
Which we durst never yet, and with strain'd pride
To come between our sentence and our power,
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,
Our potency made good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee, for provision

To shield thee from diseases of the world;
And on the sixth to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom: if, on the tenth day following,
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is thy death. Away! by Jupiter,
This shall not be revoked.

Kent. Fare thee well, king: sith thus thou wilt appear,
Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.
[*To Cordelia*] The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,
That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said!
[*To Regan and Goneril*] And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
That good effects may spring from words of love.
Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;
He 'll shape his old course in a country new. [*Exit.*

Flourish. Re-enter Gloucester, *with* France, Burgundy, *and* Attendants

Glou. Here 's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.

Lear. My lord of Burgundy,
We first address towards you, who with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter: what, in the least,
Will you require in present dower with her,
Or cease your quest of love?

Bur. Most royal majesty,
I crave no more than what your highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.

Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;

But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands:
If aught within that little seeming substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure pieced,
And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
She 's there and she is yours.
Bur. I know no answer.
Lear. Will you, with those infirmities she owes,
Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?
Bur. Pardon me, royal sir;
Election makes not up on such conditions.
Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that made me,
I tell you all her wealth. [*To France*] For you, great king,
I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
To avert your liking a more worthier way
Than on a wretch whom nature is ashamed
Almost to acknowledge hers.
France. This is most strange,
That she, that even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
Most best, most dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favour. Sure, her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree,
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fall'n into taint: which to believe of her,

Must be a faith that reason without miracle
Could never plant in me.

Cor. I yet beseech your majesty, —
If for I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not, — since what I well intend,
I 'll do 't before I speak, — that you make known
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,
No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,
That hath deprived me of your grace and favour;
But even for want of that for which I am richer,
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
As I am glad I have not, though not to have it
Hath lost me in your liking.

Lear. Better thou
Hadst not been born than not to have pleased me better.

France. Is it but this, — a tardiness in nature
Which often leaves the history unspoke
That it intends to do? My lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love 's not love
When it is mingled with regards that stand
Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.

Bur. Royal Lear,
Give but that portion which yourself proposed,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Nothing; I have sworn; I am firm.

Bur. I am sorry, then, you have so lost a father
That you must lose a husband.

Cor. Peace be with Burgundy!

Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.
France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most loved, despised!
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon:
Be it lawful I take up what 's cast away.
Gods, gods! 't is strange that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflamed respect.
Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France: 260
Not all the dukes of waterish Burgundy
Can buy this unprized precious maid of me.
Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind:
Thou losest here, a better where to find.
Lear. Thou hast her, France: let her be thine; for we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
That face of hers again. Therefore be gone
Without our grace, our love, our benison.
Come, noble Burgundy.
[*Flourish. Exeunt all but France, Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia.*
France. Bid farewell to your sisters. 270
Cor. The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you: I know you what you are;
And like a sister am most loath to call
Your faults as they are named. Use well our father:
To your professed bosoms I commit him:

But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So, farewell to you both.

Reg. Prescribe not us our duties.

Gon. Let your study
Be to content your lord, who hath received you
At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

Cor. Time shall unfold what plaited cunning hides:
Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
Well may you prosper!

France. Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt France and Cordelia.*

Gon. Sister, it is not a little I have to say of what most nearly appertains to us both. I think our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That 's most certain, and with you; next month with us.

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it hath not been little: he always loved our sister most; and with what poor judgement he hath now cast her off appears too grossly.

Reg. 'T is the infirmity of his age: yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash; then must we look to receive from his age, not alone the imperfections of long-engraffed condition, but therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking between France and him. Pray you, let's hit together: if our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

Reg. We shall further think on 't.

Gon. We must do something, and i' the heat.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *The Earl of Gloucester's castle*

Enter Edmund, *with a letter*

Edm. Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-
shines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well, then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate: fine word, — legitimate!

Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Enter Gloucester

Glou. Kent banish'd thus! and France in choler parted!
And the king gone to-night! subscribed his power!
Confined to exhibition! All this done
Upon the gad! Edmund, how now! what news?

Edm. So please your lordship, none.
[*Putting up the letter.*

Glou. Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

Glou. What paper were you reading?

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glou. No? What needed, then, that terrible dispatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let 's see: come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me: it is a letter from my brother, that I have not all o'er-read; and for so much as I have perused, I find it not fit for your o'er-looking.

Glou. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Glou. Let 's see, let 's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.

Glou. [*Reads*] "This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, Edgar."

Hum — conspiracy! — "Sleep till I waked him, — you should enjoy half his revenue," — My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? — When came this to you? who brought it?

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord; there 's the cunning of it; I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

Glou. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

Glou. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is not in the contents.

Glou. Hath he never heretofore sounded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord: but I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declining, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Glou. O villain, villain! His very opinion in the letter! Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish! Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him: abominable villain! Where is he?

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you shall run a certain course; where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath wrote this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no further pretence of danger.

Glou. Think you so?

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and that without any further delay than this very evening.

Glou. He cannot be such a monster —

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Glou. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him. Heaven and earth! Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution.

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently; convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Glou. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects: love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there 's son against father: the king falls from bias of nature; there 's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves. Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully. And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his offence, honesty! 'T is strange.

[*Exit.*

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune, — often the surfeit of our own behaviour, — we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers, by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: an admirable evasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the

dragon's tail; and my nativity was under Ursa major; so that it follows, I am rough and lecherous. Tut, I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing. Edgar —

Enter Edgar

and pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy: my cue is villanous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam. O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi.

Edg. How now, brother Edmund! what serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself about that?

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. Come, come; when saw you my father last?

Edg. Why, the night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him by word or countenance?

Edg. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That 's my fear. I pray you, have a continent forbearance till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: pray ye, go; there 's my key: if you do stir abroad, go armed.

Edg. Armed, brother!

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best; go armed: I am no honest man if there be any good meaning towards you: I have told you what I have seen and heard; but faintly, nothing like the image and horror of it: pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business.

[*Exit Edgar.*

A credulous father! and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy! I see the business.
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me 's meet that I can fashion fit. [*Exit.*

Scene III — *The Duke of Albany's palace*

Enter Goneril, *and* Oswald, *her steward*

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

Osw. Yes, madam.

Gon. By day and night he wrongs me; every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other,
That sets us all at odds: I 'll not endure it:
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle. When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him; say I am sick:
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I 'll answer.

Osw. He 's coming, madam; I hear him.

[*Horns within.*

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I 'ld have it come to question:
If he dislike it, let him to our sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-ruled. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away! Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again; and must be used
With checks as flatteries, — when they are seen abused.
Remember what I tell you.

Osw. Well, madam.

Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among you;
What grows of it, no matter; advise your fellows so:

I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak: I 'll write straight to my sister,
To hold my very course. Prepare for dinner.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *A hall in the same*

Enter Kent, *disguised*

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech defuse, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I razed my likeness. Now, banish'd Kent,
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,
So may it come, thy master, whom thou lovest,
Shall find thee full of labours.

Horns within. Enter Lear, Knights, *and* Attendants

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner; go get it ready. [*Exit an Attendant.*] How now! what art thou?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess? what wouldst thou with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust: to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise, and says little; to fear judgement; to fight when I cannot choose; and to eat no fish.

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Who wouldst thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.

Lear. What 's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for anything: I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me: if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet. Dinner, ho, dinner! Where 's my knave? my fool? Go you, and call my fool hither. [*Exit an Attendant.*

Enter Oswald

You, you, sirrah, where 's my daughter?

Osw. So please you, — [*Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back. [*Exit a Knight.*] Where 's my fool, ho? I think the world 's asleep.

Re-enter Knight

How now! where 's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I called him?

Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not!

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgement, your highness is not entertained with that ceremonious affection as you were wont; there 's a great abatement of kindness appears as well in the general dependants as in the duke himself also and your daughter.

Lear. Ha! sayest thou so?

Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent when I think your highness wronged.

Lear. Thou but rememberest me of mine own conception: I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness: I will look further into 't. But where 's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the fool hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well. Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with

her. [*Exit an Attendant.*] Go you, call hither my fool. [*Exit an Attendant.*

Re-enter Oswald

O, you sir, you, come you hither, sir: who am I, sir?

Osw. My lady's father.

Lear. "My lady's father"! my lord's knave: you whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

Osw. I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal? [*Striking him.*

Osw. I 'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripped neither, you base foot-ball player. [*Tripping up his heels.*

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou servest me, and I 'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away! I 'll teach you differences: away, away! If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry: but away! go to; have you wisdom? so. [*Pushes Oswald out.*

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there 's earnest of thy service. [*Giving Kent money.*

Enter Fool

Fool. Let me hire him too: here's my coxcomb. [*Offering Kent his cap.*

Lear. How now, my pretty knave! how dost thou?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. Why, for taking one's part that 's out of favour: nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou 'lt catch cold shortly: there, take my coxcomb: why, this fellow has banished two on 's daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will: if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb. How now, nuncle! Would I had two coxcombs and two daughters!

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. If I gave them all my living, I 'ld keep my coxcombs myself. There 's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.

Fool. Truth 's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipped out, when Lady the brach may stand by the fire and stink.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me!

Fool. Sirrah, I 'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle:

Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest,
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,
Set less than thou throwest;
Leave thy drink and thy whore,
And keep in-a-door,
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.

Kent. This is nothing, fool.

Fool. Then 't is like the breath of an unfee'd

lawyer; you gave me nothing for 't. Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

Lear. Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. [*To Kent*] Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a fool.

Lear. A bitter fool!

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool?

Lear. No, lad; teach me.

Fool. That lord that counsell'd thee
To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me,
Do thou for him stand:
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

Fool. No, faith, lords and great men will not let me; if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on 't: and ladies too, they will not let me have all fool to myself; they 'll be snatching. Give me an egg, nuncle, and I 'll give thee two crowns.

Lear. What two crowns shall they be?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i' the middle, and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg.

When thou clovest thy crown i' the middle, and gavest away both parts, thou borest thy ass on thy back o'er the dirt: thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown, when thou gavest thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipped that first finds it so.

[*Singing*] Fools had ne'er less wit in a year;
For wise men are grown foppish,
They know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish.

Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, ever since thou madest thy daughters thy mother: for when thou gavest them the rod, and put'st down thine own breeches,

[*Singing*] Then they for sudden joy did weep,
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among.

Prithee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to lie: I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we 'll have you whipped.

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are: they 'll have me whipped for speaking true, thou 'lt have me whipped for lying; and sometimes I am whipped for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing than a fool: and yet I would not be thee, nuncle; thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing i' the middle: here comes one o' the parings.

Enter Goneril

Lear. How now, daughter! what makes that frontlet on? Methinks you are too much of late i' the frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure: I am better than thou art now; I am a fool, thou art nothing. [*To Gon.*] Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue; so your face bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum,

He that keeps nor crust nor crum,
Weary of all, shall want some.

[*Pointing to Lear*] That 's a shealed peascod.

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licensed fool,
But other of your insolent retinue
Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be-endured riots. Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
To have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful,
By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,
Might in their working do you that offence,
Which else were shame, that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For, you know, nuncle,

The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had it head bit off by it young.

So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?
Gon. Come, sir.
I would you would make use of that good wisdom,
Whereof I know you are fraught; and put away
These dispositions, that of late transform you
From what you rightly are.
Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse? Whoop, Jug! I love thee.
Lear. Doth any here know me? This is not Lear:
Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, his discernings
Are lethargied — Ha! waking? 't is not so.
Who is it that can tell me who I am?
Fool. Lear's shadow.
Lear. I would learn that; for, by the marks of sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded I had daughters.
Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.
Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?
Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the savour
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
To understand my purposes aright:
As you are old and reverend, you should be wise.
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd and bold,
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
Make it more like a tavern or a brothel
Than a graced palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy: be then desired

By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train;
And the remainder that shall still depend,
To be such men as may besort your age,
And know themselves and you.
Lear. Darkness and devils!
Saddle my horses; call my train together.
Degenerate bastard! I 'll not trouble thee:
Yet have I left a daughter.
Gon. You strike my people, and your disorder'd rabble
Make servants of their betters.

Enter Albany

Lear. Woe, that too late repents, — [*To Alb.*] O, sir, are you come?
Is it your will? Speak, sir. Prepare my horses.
Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child
Than the sea-monster!
Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.
Lear. [*To Gon.*] Detested kite! thou liest:
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know,
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name. O most small fault,
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!
That, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature
From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love,
And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in,
[*Striking his head.*

And thy dear judgement out! Go, go, my people.

Alb. My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant
Of what hath moved you.

Lear. It may be so, my lord.
Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
To make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen; that it may live
And be a thwart disnatured torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child! Away, away! [*Exit.*

Alb. Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this?

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause;
But let his disposition have that scope
That dotage gives it.

Re-enter Lear

Lear. What, fifty of my followers at a clap!
Within a fortnight!

Alb. What 's the matter, sir?

Lear. I 'll tell thee: [*To Gon.*] Life and death!
I am ashamed

That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus;
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs upon thee!
The untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee! Old fond eyes,
Beweep this cause again, I 'll pluck ye out,
And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
To temper clay. Yea, is it come to this?
Let it be so: yet have I left a daughter,
Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable:
When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
She 'll flay thy wolvish visage. Thou shalt find
That I 'll resume the shape which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever: thou shalt, I warrant thee.
[*Exeunt Lear, Kent, and Attendants.*

Gon. Do you mark that, my lord?

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
To the great love I bear you, —

Gon. Pray you, content. What, Oswald, ho!
[*To the Fool*] You sir, more knave than fool, after your master.

Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry and take the fool with thee.

A fox, when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter:
So the fool follows after. [*Exit.*

Gon. This man hath had good counsel: — a hundred knights!
'T is politic and safe to let him keep

At point a hundred knights: yes, that on every
dream,
Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
And hold our lives in mercy. Oswald, I say!
Alb. Well, you may fear too far.
Gon. Safer than trust too far:
Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be taken: I know his heart.
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister:
If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
When I have show'd the unfitness, —

Re-enter Oswald

How now, Oswald!
What, have you writ that letter to my sister?
Osw. Yes, madam.
Gon. Take you some company, and away to
horse:
Inform her full of my particular fear;
And thereto add such reasons of your own
As may compact it more. Get you gone;
And hasten your return. [*Exit Oswald.*] No, no,
my lord,
This milky gentleness and course of yours
Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attask'd for want of wisdom
Than praised for harmful mildness.
Alb. How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell:
Striving to better, oft we mar what 's well.
Gon. Nay, then —
Alb. Well, well; the event. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V — *Court before the same*

Enter Lear, Kent, *and* Fool

Lear. Go you before to Gloucester with these letters. Acquaint my daughter no further with any thing you know than comes from her demand out of the letter. If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore you.

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered your letter. [*Exit.*

Fool. If a man's brains were in 's heels, were 't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then, I prithee, be merry; thy wit shall ne'er go slip-shod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee kindly; for though she 's as like this as a crab 's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

Lear. Why, what canst thou tell, my boy?

Fool. She will taste as like this as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' the middle on 's face?

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side 's nose; that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong —

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put his head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature. So kind a father! Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight? 40

Fool. Yes, indeed: thou wouldst make a good fool.

Lear. To take 't again perforce! Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I 'ld have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How 's that?

Fool. Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven! 50
Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!

Enter GENTLEMAN

How now! are the horses ready?

Gent. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy. [*Exeunt.*

Fool. She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.

ACT II

Scene I — *The Earl of Gloucester's castle*

Enter Edmund *and* Curan *meets him*

Edm. Save thee, Curan.

Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his duchess will be here with him this night.

Edm. How comes that?

Cur. Nay, I know not. You have heard of the news abroad; I mean the whispered ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments?

Edm. Not I: pray you, what are they?

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Edm. The duke be here to-night? The better! best!

This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queasy question,
Which I must act: briefness and fortune, work!
Brother, a word; descend: brother, I say!

Enter Edgar

My father watches: O sir, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid;
You have now the good advantage of the night:

Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
He 's coming hither; now, i' the night, i' the haste,
And Regan with him: have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
Advise yourself.

Edg. I am sure on 't, not a word.

Edm. I hear my father coming: pardon me; 30
In cunning I must draw my sword upon you:
Draw; seem to defend yourself; now quit you well.
Yield: come before my father. Light, ho, here!
Fly, brother. Torches, torches! So, farewell.
[*Exit Edgar.*
Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
[*Wounds his arm.*
Of my more fierce endeavour: I have seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport. Father, father!
Stop, stop! No help?

Enter Gloucester, *and* Servants *with torches*

Glou. Now, Edmund, where 's the villain?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out, 40
Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand auspicious mistress, —

Glou. But where is he?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.

Glou. Where is the villain, Edmund?

Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could —

Glou. Pursue him, ho! Go after. [*Exeunt some servants.*] By no means what?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;
But that I told him, the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend;
Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father; sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his prepared sword, he charges home
My unprovided body, lanced mine arm:
But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, roused to the encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
Full suddenly he fled.

Glou. Let him fly far:
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;
And found — dispatch. The noble duke my master,
My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night:
By his authority I will proclaim it,
That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
Bringing the murderous coward to the stake;
He that conceals him, death.

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech
I threaten'd to discover him: he replied,
"Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal
Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee
Make thy words faith'd? No: what I should deny, —
As this I would; ay, though thou didst produce

My very character, — I 'ld turn it all
To thy suggestion, plot, and damn'd practice:
And thou must make a dullard of the world,
If they not thought the profits of my death
Were very pregnant and potential spurs
To make thee seek it."

Glou. Strong and fasten'd villain!
Would he deny his letter? I never got him.
[*Tucket within.*
Hark, the duke's trumpets! I know not why he comes.
All ports I 'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape;
The duke must grant me that: besides, his picture
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
May have due note of him; and of my land,
Loyal and natural boy, I 'll work the means
To make thee capable.

Enter Cornwall, Regan, *and* Attendants

Corn. How now, my noble friend! since I came hither,
Which I can call but now, I have heard strange news.

Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short
Which can pursue the offender. How dost, my lord?

Glou. O, madam, my old heart is crack'd, is crack'd!

Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your life?
He whom my friend named? your Edgar?

Glou. O, lady, lady, shame would have it hid!

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tend upon my father?
Glou. I know not, madam: 't is too bad, too bad.
Edm. Yes, madam, he was of that consort.
Reg. No marvel, then, though he were ill affected:
'T is they have put him on the old man's death,
To have the expense and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them; and with such cautions,
That if they come to sojourn at my house,
I 'll not be there.
Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.
Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.
Edm. 'T was my duty, sir.
Glou. He did bewray his practice; and received
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.
Corn. Is he pursued?
Glou. Ay, my good lord.
Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm: make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please. For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours:
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.
Edm. I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.

Glou. For him I thank your grace.
Corn. You know not why we came to visit you, —
Reg. Thus out of season, threading dark-eyed night:
Occasions, noble Gloucester, of some poise,
Wherein we must have use of your advice:
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I least thought it fit
To answer from our home; the several messengers
From hence attend dispatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom; and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use.
Glou. I serve you, madam:
Your graces are right welcome. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II — *Before Gloucester's castle*

Enter KENT *and* OSWALD, *severally*

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend: art of this house?
Kent. Ay.
Osw. Where may we set our horses?
Kent. I' the mire.
Osw. Prithee, if thou lovest me, tell me.
Kent. I love thee not.
Osw. Why, then, I care not for thee.
Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would make thee care for me.
Osw. Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.
Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Osw. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking knave; a whoreson, glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch: one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deniest the least syllable of thy addition.

Osw. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one that is neither known of thee nor knows thee!

Kent. What a brazen-faced varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me! Is it two days ago since I tripped up thy heels, and beat thee before the king? Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, yet the moon shines; I 'll make a sop o' the moonshine of you: draw, you whoreson cullionly barbermonger, draw. [*Drawing his sword.*

Osw. Away! I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal: you come with letters against the king; and take vanity the puppet's part against the royalty of her father: draw, you rogue, or I 'll so carbonado your shanks: draw, you rascal; come your ways.

Osw. Help, ho! murder! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand; you neat slave, strike. [*Beating him.*

Osw. Help, ho! murder! murder!

Enter Edmund *with his rapier drawn,* Cornwall, Regan, Gloucester, *and* Servants

Edm. How now! What 's the matter?

Kent. With you, goodman boy, an you please: come, I 'll flesh ye; come on, young master.

Glou. Weapons! arms! What 's the matter here?

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives:
He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?

Reg. The messengers from our sisters and the king.

Corn. What is your difference? speak.

Osw. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirred your valour. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in thee: a tailor made thee.

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, sir: a stone-cutter or a painter could not have made him so ill, though he had been but two hours at the trade.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Osw. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spared at suit of his gray beard, —

Kent. Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary letter! My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub the walls of a jakes with him. Spare my gray beard, you wagtail?

Corn. Peace, sirrah!
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.
Corn. Why art thou angry?
Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain
Which are too intrinse t' unloose; smooth every passion
That in the natures of their lords rebel;
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters,
Knowing nought, like dogs, but following.
A plague upon your epileptic visage!
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
I 'ld drive ye cackling home to Camelot.
Corn. What, art thou mad, old fellow?
Glou. How fell you out? say that.
Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave.
Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What 's his offence?
Kent. His countenance likes me not.
Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor hers.
Kent. Sir, 't is my occupation to be plain:
I have seen better faces in my time
Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.
Corn. This is some fellow,

Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature: he cannot flatter, he,
An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth!
An they will take it, so; if not, he 's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends
Than twenty silly ducking observants
That stretch their duties nicely.

Kent. Sir, in good sooth, in sincere verity,
Under the allowance of your great aspect,
Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering Phœbus' front, —

Corn. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer: he that beguiled you in a plain accent was a plain knave; which for my part I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to 't.

Corn. What was the offence you gave him?

Osw. I never gave him any:
It pleased the king his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he, conjunct, and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthied him, got praises of the king
For him attempting who was self-subdued;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues and cowards

But Ajax is their fool.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverent braggart,
We 'll teach you —

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn:
Call not your stocks for me: I serve the king;
On whose employment I was sent to you:
You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks! As I have life and honour,
There shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon! till night, my lord; and all night too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same colour
Our sister speaks of. Come, bring away the stocks!

[*Stocks brought out.*

Glou. Let me beseech your grace not to do so:
His fault is much, and the good king his master
Will check him for 't: your purposed low correction
Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches
For pilferings and most common trespasses
Are punish'd with: the king must take it ill,
That he, so slightly valued in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd.

Corn. I 'll answer that.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abused, assaulted,

For following her affairs. Put in his legs.
[*Kent is put in the stocks.*
Come, my good lord, away.
[*Exeunt all but Gloucester and Kent.*
Glou. I am sorry for thee, friend; 't is the duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd: I 'll entreat for thee.
Kent. Pray, do not, sir: I have watched and travell'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I 'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:
Give you good morrow!
Glou. The duke 's to blame in this; 't will be ill-taken. [*Exit.*
Kent. Good king, that must approve the common saw,
Thou out of heaven's benediction comest
To the warm sun!
Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter! Nothing almost sees miracles
But misery: I know 't is from Cordelia,
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course; and shall find time
From this enormous state, seeking to give
Losses their remedies. All weary and o'er-watch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.
Fortune, good night: smile once more; turn thy wheel! [*Sleeps.*

Scene III — *A wood*

Enter Edgar

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escaped the hunt. No port is free; no place,
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may 'scape,
I will preserve myself: and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast: my face I 'll grime with filth:
Blanket my loins; elf all my hair in knots;
And with presented nakedness out-face
The winds and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!
That 's something yet: Edgar I nothing am. [*Exit.*

Scene IV — *Before Gloucester's castle. Kent in the stocks*

Enter Lear, Fool, *and* Gentleman

Lear. 'T is strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send back my messenger.

Gent. As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.
Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!
Lear. Ha!
Makest thou this shame thy pastime?
Gent. No, my lord.
Fool. Ha, ha! he wears cruel garters. Horses are tied by the heads, dogs and bears by the neck, monkeys by the loins, and men by the legs: when a man's over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden nether-stocks.
Lear. What 's he that hath so much thy place mistook
To set thee here?
Kent. It is both he and she;
Your son and daughter.
Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.
Lear. No, I say.
Kent. I say, yea.
Lear. No, no, they would not.
Kent. Yes, they have.
Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.
Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.
Lear. They durst not do 't;
They could not, would not do 't; 't is worse than murder,
To do upon respect such violent outrage:
Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
Thou mightst deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letter to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress salutations;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read: on whose contents,
They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse;
Commanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks:
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceived, had poison'd mine, —
Being the very fellow that of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness, —
Having more man than wit about me, drew:
He raised the house with loud and coward cries.
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.

Fool. Winter 's not gone yet, if the wild-geese fly that way.

Fathers that wear rags
Do make their children blind;
But fathers that bear bags
Shall see their children kind.
Fortune, that arrant whore,
Ne'er turns the key to the poor.

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours for thy daughters as thou canst tell in a year.

Lear. O, how this mother swells up toward my heart!
Hysterica passio, down, thou climbing sorrow,

Thy element 's below! Where is this daughter?

Kent. With the earl, sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not;
Stay here. [*Exit.*

Gent. Made you no more offence but what you speak of?

Kent. None.
How chance the king comes with so small a train?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' the stocks for that question, thou hadst well deserved it.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. We 'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there 's no labouring i' the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men; and there 's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that 's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That sir which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form,
Will pack when it begins to rain,
And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the fool will stay,
And let the wise man fly:
The knave turns fool that runs away;
The fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learned you this, fool?

Fool. Not i' the stocks, fool.

Re-enter Lear, *with* Gloucester

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary?
They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches;
The images of revolt and flying off.
Fetch me a better answer.
Glou. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremoveable and fix'd he is
In his own course.
Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!
Fiery? what quality? Why, Gloucester, Gloucester,
I 'ld speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.
Glou. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.
Lear. Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me, man?
Glou. Ay, my good lord.
Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands her service:
Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood!
Fiery? the fiery duke? Tell the hot duke that —
No, but not yet: may be he is not well:
Infirmity doth still neglect all office
Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body: I 'll forbear;
And am fall'n out with my more headier will,

To take the indisposed and sickly fit
For the sound man. Death on my state! wherefore [*Looking on Kent.*
Should he sit here? This act persuades me
That this remotion of the duke and her
Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.
Go tell the duke and 's wife I 'ld speak with them,
Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear me,
Or at their chamber-door I 'll beat the drum
Till it cry sleep to death.

Glou. I would have all well betwixt you. [*Exit.*

Lear. O me, my heart, my rising heart! but, down!

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels when she put 'em i' the paste alive; she knapped 'em o' the coxcombs with a stick, and cried "Down, wantons, down!" 'T was her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, buttered his hay.

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Gloucester, *and* Servants

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn. Hail to your grace! [*Kent is set at liberty.*

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what reason
I have to think so: if thou shouldst not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulchring an adultress. [*To Kent*] O, are you free?
Some other time for that. Beloved Regan,

Thy sister 's naught: O Regan, she hath tied
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here:
[*Points to his heart.*
I can scarce speak to thee; thou 'lt not believe
With how depraved a quality — O Regan!
Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience: I have hope
You less know how to value her desert
Than she to scant her duty.
Lear. Say, how is that?
Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: if, sir, perchance
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'T is on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.
Lear. My curses on her!
Reg. O, sir, you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine: you should be ruled and led
By some discretion, that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return;
Say you have wrong'd her, sir.
Lear. Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
"Dear daughter, I confess that I am old; [*Kneeling.*
Age is unnecessary: on my knees I beg
That you 'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food."
Reg. Good sir, no more; these are unsightly tricks:
Return you to my sister.
Lear. [*Rising*] Never, Regan:
She hath abated me of half my train;

Look'd black upon me; struck me with her tongue
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart:
All the stored vengeances of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!

Corn. Fie, sir, fie!

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blast her pride!

Reg. O the blest gods! so will you wish on me,
When the rash mood is on.

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse:
Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness: her eyes are fierce; but thine
Do comfort and not burn. 'T is not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And in conclusion to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in: thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;
Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg. Good sir, to the purpose.

Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks?

[*Tucket within.*

Corn. What trumpet 's that?

Reg. I know 't, my sister's: this approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.

Enter Oswald

Is your lady come?

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.
Out, varlet, from my sight!

Corn. What means your grace?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant? Regan, I have good hope
Thou didst not know on 't. Who comes here? O heavens,

Enter Goneril

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down, and take my part!
[*To Gon.*] Art not ashamed to look upon this beard?
O Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand?

Gon. Why not by the hand, sir? How have I offended?
All 's not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.

Lear. O sides, you are too tough;
Will you yet hold? How came my man i' the stocks?

Corn. I set him there, sir: but his own disorders
Deserved much less advancement.

Lear. You! did you?

Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.

If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me:
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.
Lear. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd?
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' the air;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl, —
Necessity's sharp pinch! Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot. Return with her?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom. [*Pointing at Oswald.*
Gon. At your choice, sir.
Lear. I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad:
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell:
We 'll no more meet, no more see one another:
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
Or rather a disease that 's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I 'll not chide thee;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove:
Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure:
I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
I and my hundred knights.
Reg. Not altogether so:

I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my sister;
For those that mingle reason with your passion
Must be content to think you old, and so —
But she knows what she does.

Lear. Is this well spoken?

Reg. I dare avouch it, sir: what, fifty followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger
Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one house,
Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity? 'T is hard; almost impossible.

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those that she calls servants or from mine?

Reg. Why not, my lord? If then they chanced to slack you,
We could control them. If you will come to me, —
For now I spy a danger, — I entreat you
To bring but five-and-twenty: to no more
Will I give place or notice.

Lear. I gave you all —

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries;
But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number. What, must I come to you
With five-and-twenty, Regan? said you so?

Reg. And speak 't again, my lord; no more with me.

Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd,

When others are more wicked; not being the worst
Stands in some rank of praise. [*To Gon.*] I 'll go with thee:
Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
And thou art twice her love.
Gon. Hear me, my lord:
What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?
Reg. What need one?
Lear. O, reason not the need: our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life 's as cheap as beast's: thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true need, —
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!
If it be you that stirs these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,
And let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall — I will do such things, —
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think I 'll weep;

No, I 'll not weep:
I have full cause of weeping ; but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,
Or ere I 'll weep. O fool, I shall go mad!

[*Exeunt Lear, Gloucester, Kent, and Fool.*
Storm and tempest.

Corn. Let us withdraw; 't will be a storm.

Reg. This house is little: the old man and his people
Cannot be well bestow'd.

Gon. 'T is his own blame; hath put himself from rest,
And must needs taste his folly.

Reg. For his particular, I 'll receive him gladly,
But not one follower.

Gon. So am I purposed.
Where is my lord of Gloucester?

Corn. Follow'd the old man forth: he is return'd.

Re-enter Gloucester

Glou. The king is in high rage.

Corn. Whither is he going?

Glou. He calls to horse; but will I know not whither.

Corn. 'T is best to give him way; he leads himself.

Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.

Glou. Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak winds
Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about
There 's scarce a bush.

Reg. O, sir, to wilful men,
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors,
He is attended with a desperate train;
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abused, wisdom bids fear.
Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord; 't is a wild night:
My Regan counsels well: come out o' the storm.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I — *A heath*

Storm still. Enter KENT *and a* Gentleman, *meeting*

Kent. Who 's there, besides foul weather?
Gent. One minded like the weather, most unquietly.
Kent. I know you. Where 's the king?
Gent. Contending with the fretful element;
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,
That things might change or cease; tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of;
Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,
The lion and the belly-pinched wolf

Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all.
Kent. But who is with him?
Gent. None but the fool; who labours to outjest
His heart-struck injuries.
Kent. Sir, I do know you;
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have — as who have not, that their great stars
Throned and set high? — servants, who seem no less,
Which are to France the spies and speculations
Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen,
Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes,
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
Against the old kind king; or something deeper,
Whereof perchance these are but furnishings;
But, true it is, from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner. Now to you:
If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
The king hath cause to plain.
I am a gentleman of blood and breeding;

And, from some knowledge and assurance, offer
This office to you.

Gent. I will talk further with you.

Kent. No, do not.
For confirmation that I am much more
Than my out-wall, open this purse, and take
What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia, —
As fear not but you shall, — show her this ring;
And she will tell you who your fellow is
That yet you do not know. Fie on this storm!
I will go seek the king.

Gent. Give me your hand: have you no more to say?

Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet;
That, when we have found the king, — in which your pain
That way, I 'll this, — he that first lights on him
Holla the other. [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene II — *Another part of the heath. Storm still*

Enter Lear *and* Fool

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,

Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!

Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry house is better than this rain-water out o' door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughters' blessing: here 's a night pities neither wise man nor fool.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription: then let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man:
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Your high engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O! O! 't is foul!

Fool. He that has a house to put 's head in has a good head-piece.

The cod-piece that will house
Before the head has any,
The head and he shall louse;
So beggars marry many.
The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.

For there was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in a glass.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience; I will say nothing.

Enter Kent

Kent. Who 's there?

Fool. Marry, here 's grace and a cod-piece; that 's a wise man and a fool.

Kent. Alas, sir, are you here? things that love night
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves: since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry
The affliction nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp'd of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;
Thou perjured, and thou simular man of virtue
That are incestuous: caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practised on man's life: close pent-up guilts
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Alack, bare-headed!
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;

Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest:
Repose you there; while I to this hard house —
More harder than the stones whereof 't is raised;
Which even but now, demanding after you,
Denied me to come in — return, and force
Their scanted courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.
Come on, my boy: how dost, my boy? art cold?
I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That 's sorry yet for thee.

Fool. [*Singing*] He that has and a little tiny wit,—
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain, —
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
For the rain it raineth every day.

Lear. True, my good boy. Come, bring us to this hovel. [*Exeunt Lear and Kent.*

Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtezan.
I 'll speak a prophecy ere I go:
When priests are more in word than matter;
When brewers mar their malt with water;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors;
No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors;
When every case in law is right;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight;
When slanders do not live in tongues;
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs;
When usurers tell their gold i' the field;

And bawds and whores do churches build;
Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion:
Then comes the time, who lives to see 't,
That going shall be used with feet.
This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time. [*Exit.*

Scene III — *Gloucester's castle*

Enter Gloucester *and* Edmund

Glou. Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house; charged me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage and unnatural!

Glou. Go to; say you nothing. There 's a division betwixt the dukes; and a worse matter than that: I have received a letter this night; 't is dangerous to be spoken; I have locked the letter in my closet: these injuries the king now bears will be revenged home; there 's part of a power already footed: we must incline to the king. I will seek him, and privily relieve him: go you and maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived: if he ask for me, I am ill, and gone to bed. Though I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king my old master must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund; pray you, be careful. [*Exit.*

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke
Instantly know; and of that letter too:
This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me
That which my father loses; no less than all:
The younger rises when the old doth fall. [*Exit.*

Scene IV — *The heath. Before a hovel*

Enter Lear, Kent, *and* Fool

Kent. Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:
The tyranny of the open night 's too rough
For nature to endure. [*Storm still.*
Lear. Let me alone.
Kent. Good my lord, enter here.
Lear. Wilt break my heart?
Kent. I had rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.
Lear. Thou think'st 't is much that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin: so 't is to thee;
But where the greater malady is fixed,
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou 'ldst shun a bear;
But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,
Thou 'ldst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind 's free,
The body 's delicate: the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
For lifting food to 't? But I will punish home:
No, I will weep no more. In such a night

To shut me out! Pour on; I will endure.
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all, —
O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Prithee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease:
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. But I 'll go in.
[*To the Fool*] In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty, —
Nay, get thee in. I 'll pray, and then I 'll sleep.
[*Fool goes in.*
Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.

Edg. [*Within*] Fathom and half, fathom and half!
Poor Tom! [*The Fool runs out from the hovel.*

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle, here 's a spirit.
Help me, help me!

Kent. Give me thy hand. Who 's there?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit: he says his name 's poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i' the straw? Come forth.

Enter Edgar *disguised as a madman*

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me!
Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.
Hum! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

Lear. Hast thou given all to thy two daughters?
And art thou come to this?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. Bless they five wits! Tom 's a-cold, — O, do de, do de, do de. Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes: there could I have him now, — and there, — and there again, and there. [*Storm still.*

Lear. What, have his daughters brought him to this pass?
Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give them all?

Fool. Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all shamed.

Lear. Now, all the plagues that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.
Is it the fashion that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 't was this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill:
Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' the foul fiend: obey thy parents; keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom 's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curled my hair; wore gloves in my cap; served the lust of my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven: one that slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it: wine loved I deeply, dice dearly; and in woman out-paramoured the Turk: false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman: keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend. Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind:
Says suum, mun, ha, no, nonny.

Dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa! let him trot by.
[*Storm still.*

Lear. Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here 's three on 's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! come, unbutton here. [*Tearing off his clothes.*

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 't is a naughty night to swim in. Now a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's heart; a small spark, all the rest on's body cold. Look, here comes a walking fire.

Enter Gloucester, *with a torch*

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet: he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

S. Withold footed thrice the old;
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

Kent. How fares your grace?

Lear. What 's he?

Kent. Who 's there? What is 't you seek?

Glou. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing-pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing, and stock-punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear;

But mice and rats, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Beware my follower. Peace, Smulkin; peace, thou fiend!

Glou. What, hath your grace no better company?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman: Modo he 's call'd, and Mahu.

Glou. Our flesh and blood is grown so vile, my lord,
That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom 's a-cold.

Glou. Go in with me: my duty cannot suffer
To obey in all your daughters' hard commands:
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventured to come seek you out,
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher.
What is the cause of thunder?

Kent. Good my lord, take his offer; go into the house.

Lear. I 'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.
What is your study?
Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.
Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.
Kent. Importune him once more to go, my lord;
His wits begin to unsettle.
Glou. Canst thou blame him? [*Storm still.*
His daughters seek his death; ah, that good Kent!
He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man!
Thou say'st the king grows mad; I 'll tell thee, friend,
I am almost mad myself: I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,
But lately, very late: I loved him, friend;
No father his son dearer: truth to tell thee,
The grief hath crazed my wits. What a night's this!
I do beseech your grace, —
Lear. O, cry you mercy, sir.
Noble philosopher, your company.
Edg. Tom 's a-cold.
Glou. In, fellow, there, into the hovel: keep thee warm.
Lear. Come, let 's in all.
Kent. This way, my lord.
Lear. With him;
I will keep still with my philosopher.
Kent. Good my lord, soothe him; let him take the fellow.
Glou. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirrah, come on; go along with us.
Lear. Come, good Athenian.
Glou. No words, no words: hush.
Edg. Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still, — Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V — *Gloucester's castle*

Enter Cornwall *and* Edmund

Corn. I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee Earl of Gloucester. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

Edm. [*Aside*] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully. — I will

persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI — *A chamber in a farmhouse adjoining the castle*

Enter Gloucester, Lear, Kent, Fool, *and* Edgar

Glou. Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can; I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits have given sway to his impatience: the gods reward your kindness! [*Exit Gloucester.*

Edg. Frateretto calls me; and tells me Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman? 10

Lear. A king, a king!

Fool. No, he 's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he 's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come hissing in upon 'em, —

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He 's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's 20 oath.

Lear. It shall be done; I will arraign them straight.

[*To Edgar*] Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer;
[*To the Fool*] Thou, sapient sir, sit here. Now, you she foxes!

Edg. Look, where he stands and glares! Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam?
Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me, —

Fool. Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak
Why she dares not come over to thee.

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hopdance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amazed:
Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I 'll see their trial first. Bring in the evidence.
[*To Edgar*] Thou robed man of justice, take thy place;
[*To the Fool*] And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity,
Bench by his side: [*To Kent*] you are o' the commission,
Sit you too.

Edg. Let us deal justly.
Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?
Thy sheep be in the corn;
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,
Thy sheep shall take no harm.
Pur! the cat is gray.

Lear. Arraign her first; 't is Goneril. I here

take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

Fool. Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
What store her heart is made on. Stop her there!
Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!
False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

Kent. O pity! Sir, where is the patience now,
That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. [*Aside*] My tears begin to take his part so much,
They 'll mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them. Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite;
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,
Or bobtail tike or trundle-tail,
Tom will make them weep and wail:
For, with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Do de, de, de. Sessa! Come, march to wakes and fairs and market-towns. Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.

Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts? [*To Edgar*] You, sir, I entertain for one of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your garments: you will say they are Persian attire; but let them be changed.

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here and rest awhile.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains: so, so, so. We 'll go to supper i' the morning. So, so, so.

Fool. And I 'll go to bed at noon.

Re-enter Gloucester

Glou. Come hither, friend: where is the king my master?

Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.

Glou. Good friend, I prithee, take him in thy arms;
I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him:
There is a litter ready; lay him in 't.
And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master:
If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life,
With thine, and all that offer to defend him,

Stand in assured loss: take up, take up;
And follow me, that will to some provision
Give thee quick conduct.
Kent. Oppressed nature sleeps:
This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews,
Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard cure. [*To the Fool*] Come, help to bear thy master:
Thou must not stay behind.
Glou. Come, come, away.
[*Exeunt all but Edgar.*
Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers suffers most i' the mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind:
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend makes the king bow;
He childed as I father'd! Tom, away!
Mark the high noises, and thyself bewray
When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,
In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee.
What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the king!
Lurk, lurk. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII — *Gloucester's castle*

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, *and* Servants

Corn. Post speedily to my lord your husband; show him this letter: the army of France is landed. Seek out the villain Gloucester.

[*Exeunt some of the Servants.*

Reg. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

Corn. Leave him to my displeasure. Edmund, keep you our sister company: the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister: farewell, my lord of Gloucester.

Enter OSWALD

How now! where 's the king?

Osw. My lord of Gloucester hath convey'd him hence:
Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
Hot questrists after him, met him at gate;
Who, with some other of the lords dependants,
Are gone with him towards Dover; where they boast
To have well-armed friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress.

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

Corn. Edmund, farewell.

[*Exeunt Goneril, Edmund, and Oswald.*

Go seek the traitor Gloucester,
Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.
[*Exeunt other Servants.*
Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power
Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men
May blame, but not control. Who 's there? the traitor?

Enter Gloucester, *brought in by two or three*

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 't is he.
Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.
Glou. What mean your graces? Good my friends, consider
You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.
Corn. Bind him, I say. [*Servants bind him.*
Reg. Hard, hard. O filthy traitor!
Glou. Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none.
Corn. To this chair bind him. Villain, thou shalt find — [*Regan plucks his beard.*
Glou. By the kind gods, 't is most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.
Reg. So white, and such a traitor!
Glou. Naughty lady,
These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken, and accuse thee: I am your host:
With robbers' hands my hospitable favours
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?
Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?
Reg. Be simple answerer, for we know the truth.

Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?
Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king?
Speak.
Glou. I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that 's of a neutral heart,
And not from one opposed.
Corn. Cunning.
Reg. And false.
Corn. Where hast thou sent the king?
Glou. To Dover.
Reg. Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charged at peril —
Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him first answer that.
Glou. I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.
Reg. Wherefore to Dover, sir?
Glou. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endured, would have buoy'd up,
And quench'd the stelled fires:
Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,
Thou shouldst have said "Good porter, turn the key."
All cruels else subscribed: but I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See 't shalt thou never. Fellows, hold the chair.
Upon these eyes of thine I 'll set my foot.
Glou. He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me some help! O cruel! O you gods!
Reg. One side will mock another; the other too.
Corn. If you see vengeance, —
First Serv. Hold your hand, my lord:
I have served you ever since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.
Reg. How now, you dog!
First Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I 'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?
Corn. My villain! [*They draw and fight.*
First Serv. Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of anger.
Reg. Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus!
[*Takes a sword, and runs at him behind.*
First Serv. O, I am slain! My lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on him. O! [*Dies.*
Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy lustre now?
Glou. All dark and comfortless. Where 's my son Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,
To quit this horrid act.
Reg. Out, treacherous villain!

Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us;
Who is too good to pity thee.
Glou. O my follies! then Edgar was abused.
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!
Reg. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover. [*Exit one with Gloucester.*
How is 't, my lord? how look you?
Corn. I have received a hurt: follow me, lady;
Turn out that eyeless villain; throw this slave
Upon the dunghill. Regan, I bleed apace:
Untimely comes this hurt: give me your arm.
[*Exit Cornwall led by Regan.*
Sec. Serv. I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.
Third Serv. If she live long,
And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.
Sec. Serv. Let 's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would: his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.
Third Serv. Go thou: I'll fetch some flax and whites of eggs
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help him! [*Exeunt severally.*

ACT IV

Scene I — *The heath*

Enter Edgar

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace!
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts. But who comes here?

Enter Gloucester, *led by an* Old Man

My father, poorly led? World, world, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. O, my good lord, I have been your tenant, and your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Glou. Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone:
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. Alack, sir, you cannot see your way.

Glou. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw: full oft 't is seen,
Our means secure us, and our mere defects

Prove our commodities. O dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath!
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I 'ld say I had eyes again!
Old Man. How now! Who 's there?
Edg. [*Aside*] O gods! Who is 't can say "I am at the worst"?
I am worse than e'er I was.
Old Man. 'T is poor mad Tom.
Edg. [*Aside.*] And worse I may be yet: the worst is not
So long as we can say "This is the worst."
Old Man. Fellow, where goest?
Glou. Is it a beggar-man?
Old Man. Madman and beggar too.
Glou. He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw;
Which made me think a man a worm: my son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard more since.
As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;
They kill us for their sport.
Edg. [*Aside*] How should this be?
Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Angering itself and others. — Bless thee, master!
Glou. Is that the naked fellow?
Old Man. Ay, my lord.
Glou. Then, prithee, get thee gone: if, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;

And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Who I 'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, sir, he is mad.

Glou. 'T is the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.

Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;
Above the rest, be gone.

Old Man. I 'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on 't what will. [*Exit.*

Glou. Sirrah, naked fellow, —

Edg. Poor Tom 's a-cold. [*Aside*] I cannot daub it further.

Glou. Come hither, fellow.

Edg. [*Aside*] And yet I must. — Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.

Glou. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path. Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good wits: bless thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend! five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as Obidicut: Hobbididance, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing, who since possesses chambermaids and waiting-women. So, bless thee, master!

Glou. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heavens' plagues
Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier: heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see

Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough. Dost thou know
Dover?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glou. There is a cliff, whose high and bending
head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep:
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I 'll repair the misery thou dost bear
With something rich about me: from that place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm:
Poor Tom shall lead thee. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II — *Before the Duke of Albany's palace*

Enter Goneril *and* Edmund

Gon. Welcome, my lord: I marvel our mild husband
Not met us on the way.

Enter Oswald

Now, where 's your master?

Osw. Madam, within; but never man so changed.
I told him of the army that was landed;
He smiled at it: I told him you were coming;
His answer was "The worse": of Gloucester's
treachery,
And of the loyal service of his son,
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot,
And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out:

What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him;
What like, offensive.

Gon. [*To Edm.*] Then shall you go no further.
It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
That dares not undertake: he 'll not feel wrongs
Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
Hasten his musters and conduct his powers:
I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us: ere long you are like to hear,
If you dare venture in your own behalf,
A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;
[*Giving a favour.*
Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak,
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air:
Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Gloucester!
[*Exit Edmund.*
O, the difference of man and man!
To thee a woman's services are due:
My fool usurps my body.

Osw. Madam, here comes my lord. [*Exit.*

Enter Albany

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.

Alb. O Goneril
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
Blows in your face. I fear your disposition:
That nature, which contemns it origin,
Cannot be border'd certain in itself;

She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither
And come to deadly use.
Gon. No more; the text is foolish.
Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile:
Filths savour but themselves. What have you done?
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?
A father, and a gracious aged man,
Whose reverence even the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate! have you madded.
Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
A man, a prince, by him so benefited!
If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
It will come,
Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.
Gon. Milk-liver'd man!
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs:
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honour from thy suffering; that not know'st
Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief. Where 's thy drum?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land,
With plumed helm thy state begins to threat;
Whiles thou, a moral fool, sit'st still, and criest
"Alack, why does he so?"

Alb. See thyself, devil!
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman.
Gon. O vain fool!
Alb. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame,
Be-monster not thy feature. Were 't my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones: howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.
Gon. Marry, your manhood! mew!

Enter a Messenger

Alb. What news?
Mess. O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's dead;
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloucester.
Alb. Gloucester's eyes!
Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Opposed against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enraged,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead;
But not without that harmful stroke, which since
Hath pluck'd him after.
Alb. This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge! But, O poor Gloucester!
Lost he his other eye?
Mess. Both, both, my lord.

This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;
'T is from your sister.

Gon. [*Aside*] One way I like this well;
But being widow, and my Gloucester with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life: another way,
The news is not so tart. — I 'll read, and answer.
[*Exit.*

Alb. Where was his son when they did take his eyes?

Mess. Come with my lady hither.

Alb. He is not here.

Mess. No, my good lord; I met him back again.

Alb. Knows he the wickedness?

Mess. Ay, my good lord; 't was he inform'd against him;
And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment
Might have the freer course.

Alb. Gloucester, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,
And to revenge thine eyes. Come hither, friend:
Tell me what more thou know'st. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III — *The French camp near Dover*

Enter Kent *and a* Gentleman

Kent. Why the King of France is so suddenly gone back know you the reason?

Gent. Something he left imperfect in the state, which since his coming forth is thought of; which imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger,

that his personal return was most required and necessary.

Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?

Gent. The Marshall of France, Monsieur La Far.

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any demonstration of grief?

Gent. Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek: it seem'd she was a queen
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.

Kent. O, then it moved her.

Gent. Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears
Were like, a better way: those happy smilets,
That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd. In brief,
Sorrow would be a rarity most beloved,
If all could so become it.

Kent. Made she no verbal question?

Gent. 'Faith, once or twice she heaved the name of "father"
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried "Sisters! sisters! Shame of ladies! sisters:
Kent! father! sisters! What, i' the storm? i' the night?
Let pity not be believed!" There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,

And clamour moisten'd: then away she started
To deal with grief alone.
Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us, govern our conditions;
Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since?
Gent. No.
Kent. Was this before the king return'd?
Gent. No, since.
Kent. Well, sir, the poor distress'd Lear 's i' the town;
Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.
Gent. Why, good sir?
Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him: his own unkindness,
That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters, these things sting
His mind so venomously, that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.
Gent. Alack, poor gentleman!
Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not?
Gent. 'T is so, they are afoot.
Kent. Well, sir, I 'll bring you to our master Lear,
And leave you to attend him: some dear cause
Will in concealment wrap me up awhile;
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve

Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
Along with me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV — *The same. A tent*

Enter, with drum and colours, Cordelia, Doctor, *and* Soldiers

Cor. Alack, 't is he: why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea; singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,
With hor-docks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn. A century send forth;
Search every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an Officer.*] What
can man's wisdom
In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He that helps him take all my outward worth.
Doct. There is means, madam:
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.
Cor. All blest secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress! Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter a Messenger

Mess. News, madam;
The British powers are marching hitherward.

Cor. 'T is known before; our preparation stands
In expectation of them. O dear father,
It is thy business that I go about;
Therefore great France
My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our aged father's right:
Soon may I hear and see him! [*Exeunt.*

Scene V — *Gloucester's castle*

Enter Regan *and* Oswald

Reg. But are my brother's powers set forth?
Osw. Ay, madam.
Reg. Himself in person there?
Osw. Madam, with much ado:
Your sister is the better soldier.
Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home?
Osw. No, madam.
Reg. What might import my sister's letter to him?
Osw. I know not, lady.
Reg. 'Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
It was great ignorance, Gloucester's eyes being out,
To let him live: where he arrives he moves
All hearts against us: Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity of his misery, to dispatch
His nighted life; moreover, to descry
The strength o' the enemy.

Osw. I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.

Reg. Our troops set forth to-morrow: stay with us;
The ways are dangerous.

Osw. I may not, madam:
My lady charged my duty in this business.

Reg. Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you
Transport her purposes by word? Belike,
Something — I know not what: I 'll love thee much,
Let me unseal the letter.

Osw. Madam, I had rather —

Reg. I know your lady does not love her husband;
I am sure of that: and at her late being here
She gave strange œillades and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.

Osw. I, madam?

Reg. I speak in understanding; you are, I know 't:
Therefore I do advise you, take this note:
My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talk'd;
And more convenient is he for my hand
Than for your lady's: you may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.
So, fare you well.
If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

Osw. Would I could meet him, madam! I should show
What party I do follow.
Reg. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI — *Fields near Dover*

Enter Gloucester, *and* Edgar *dressed like a peasant*

Glou. When shall we come to the top of that same hill?
Edg. You do climb up it now: look, how we labour.
Glou. Methinks the ground is even.
Edg. Horrible steep.
Hark, do you hear the sea?
Glou. No, truly.
Edg. Why, then, your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.
Glou. So may it be, indeed:
Methinks thy voice is alter'd; and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.
Edg. You 're much deceived: in nothing am I changed
But in my garments.
Glou. Methinks you 're better spoken.
Edg. Come on, sir; here 's the place: stand still. How fearful
And dizzy 't is, to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles: half way down

Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head:
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her cock; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight: the murmuring surge,
That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high. I 'll look no more,
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.

Glou. Set me where you stand.

Edg. Give me your hand: you are now within a foot
Of the extreme verge: for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.

Glou. Let go my hand.
Here, friend, 's another purse; in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking: fairies and gods
Prosper it with thee! Go thou farther off;
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Now fare you well, good sir.

Glou. With all my heart.

Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his despair
Is done to cure it.

Glou. [*Kneeling*] O you mighty gods!
This world I do renounce, and, in your sights,
Shake patiently my great affliction off:
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and loathed part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him!
Now, fellow, fare thee well. [*He falls forward.*

Edg. Gone, sir: farewell.
And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft: had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past. Alive or dead?
Ho, you sir! friend! Hear you, sir! speak!
Thus might he pass indeed: yet he revives.
What are you, sir?
Glou. Away, and let me die.
Edg. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fathom down precipitating,
Thou 'dst shiver'd like an egg: but thou dost breathe;
Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not; speak'st; art sound.
Ten masts at each make not the altitude
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell:
Thy life 's a miracle. Speak yet again.
Glou. But have I fall'n, or no?
Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a-height; the shrill-gorged lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.
Glou. Alack, I have no eyes.
Is wretchedness deprived that benefit,
To end itself by death? 'T was yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.
Edg. Give me your arm:
Up: so. How is 't? Feel you your legs? You stand.

Glou. Too well, too well.

Edg. This is above all strangeness.
Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you?

Glou. A poor unfortunate beggar.

Edg. As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd and waved like the enridged sea:
It was some fiend; therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee.

Glou. I do remember now: henceforth I 'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself
"Enough, enough," and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man; often 't would say
"The fiend, the fiend": he led me to that place.

Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts. But who comes here?

Enter Lear, *fantastically dressed with wild flowers*

The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
His master thus.

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining;
I am the king himself.

Edg. O thou side-piercing sight!

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect. There 's your press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper: draw me a clothier's yard. Look, look, a mouse! Peace, peace; this piece of toasted cheese will do 't. There 's my

gauntlet; I 'll prove it on a giant. Bring up the brown bills. O, well flown, bird! i' the clout, i' the clout: hewgh! Give the word.

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glou. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Goneril, with a white beard! They flattered me like a dog; and told me I had white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were there. To say "ay" and "no" to every thing that I said!— "Ay" and "no" too was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their words: they told me I was every thing; 't is a lie, I am not ague-proof.

Glou. The trick of that voice I do well remember:
Is 't not the king?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king:
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause?
Adultery?
Thou shalt not die: die for adultery! No:
The wren goes to 't, and the small gilded fly
Does lecher in my sight.
Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard son
Was kinder to his father than my daughters
Got 'tween the lawful sheets.
To 't, luxury, pell-mell! for I lack soldiers.
Behold yond simpering dame,

Whose face between her forks presages snow;
That minces virtue, and does shake the head
To hear of pleasure's name;
The fitchew, nor the soiled horse, goes to 't
With a more riotous appetite.
Down from the waist they are Centaurs,
Though women all above:
But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
Beneath is all the fiends';
There 's hell, there 's darkness, there 's the sulphurous pit,
Burning, scalding, stench, consumption; fie, fie, fie! pah! pah! Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination: there 's money for thee.

Glou. O, let me kiss that hand!

Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

Glou. O ruin'd piece of nature! This great world
Shall so wear out to nought. Dost thou know me?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at me? No, do thy worst, blind Cupid; I 'll not love. Read thou this challenge; mark but the penning of it.

Glou. Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.

Edg. I would not take this from report; it is,
And my heart breaks at it.

Lear. Read.

Glou. What, with the case of eyes?

Lear. O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your

eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light: yet you see how this world goes.

Glou. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears: see how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Glou. Ay, sir.

Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst behold the great image of authority: a dog 's obeyed in office.
Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!
Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;
Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.
Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.
None does offend, none, I say, none; I 'll able 'em;
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;
And, like a scurvy politician, seem
To see the things thou dost not. Now, now, now, now:
Pull off my boots: harder, harder: so.

Edg. O, matter and impertinency mix'd!

Reason in madness!

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.

I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloucester:
Thou must be patient; we came crying hither:
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,
We wawl and cry. I will preach to thee: mark.

Glou. Alack, alack the day!

Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools: this' a good block;
It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe
A troop of horse with felt: I 'll put 't in proof;
And when I have stol'n upon these sons-in-law,
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!

Enter a Gentleman, *with* Attendants

Gent. O, here he is; lay hand upon him. Sir,
Your most dear daughter —

Lear. No rescue? What, a prisoner? I am even
The natural food of fortune. Use me well;
You shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons;
I am cut to the brains.

Gent. You shall have any thing.

Lear. No seconds? all myself?
Why, this would make a man a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden water-pots,
Ay, and laying autumn's dust.

Gent. Good sir, —

Lear. I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom. What!

I will be jovial: come, come; I am a king,
My masters, know you that.

Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. Then there 's life in 't. Nay, if you get it, you shall get it with running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.

[*Exit running; Attendants follow.*

Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a king! Thou hast one daughter,
Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.

Edg. Hail, gentle sir.

Gent. Sir, speed you: what 's your will?

Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?

Gent. Most sure and vulgar: every one hears that,
Which can distinguish sound.

Edg. But, by your favour,
How near 's the other army?

Gent. Near and on speedy foot; the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.

Edg. I thank you, sir: that 's all.

Gent. Though that the queen on special cause is here,
Her army is moved on.

Edg. I thank you, sir. [*Exit Gent.*

Glou. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me;
Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please!

Edg. Well pray you, father.

Glou. Now, good sir, what are you?

Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows;
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I 'll lead you to some biding.
Glou. Hearty thanks:
The bounty and the benison of heaven
To boot, and boot!

Enter Oswald

Osw. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy! 230
That eyeless head of thine was first framed flesh
To raise my fortunes. Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember: the sword is out
That must destroy thee.
Glou. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to 't. [*Edgar interposes.*
Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Darest thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
Lest that the infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.
Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion. 240
Osw. Let go, slave, or thou diest!
Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor volk pass. An chud ha' bin zwaggered out of my life, 't would not ha' bin zo long as 't is by a vortnight. Nay, come not near th' old man; keep out, che vor ye, or ise try whether your costard or my ballow be the harder: chill be plain with you.
Osw. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, zir: come; no matter vor your foins.

[*They fight, and Edgar knocks him down.*

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me: villain, take my purse:
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body;
And give the letters which thou find'st about me
To Edmund earl of Gloucester; seek him out
Upon the British party: O, untimely death!

[*Dies.*

Edg. I know thee well: a serviceable villain
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress
As badness would desire.

Glou. What, is he dead?

Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you.
Let 's see these pockets: the letters that he speaks of
May be my friends. He 's dead; I am only sorry
He had no other death's-man. Let us see:
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not:
To know our enemies' minds, we 'ld rip their hearts;
Their papers, is more lawful.

[*Reads*] "Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You have many opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered. There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror: then am I the prisoner, and his bed my gaol; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour.

"Your — wife, so I would say —

"Affectionate servant,

"Goneril."

O undistinguish'd space of woman's will!
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;
And the exchange my brother! Here, in the sands,
Thee I 'll rake up, the post unsanctified
Of murderous lechers: and in the mature time
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practised duke: for him 't is well
That of thy death and business I can tell.

Glou. The king is mad: how stiff is my vile sense,
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract:
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
And woes by wrong imaginations lose
The knowledge of themselves.

Edg. Give me your hand:
[*Drum afar off.*
Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum:
Come, father, I 'll bestow you with a friend.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene VII — *A tent in the French camp.* Lear *on a bed asleep, soft music playing;* Gentleman, *and others attending*

Enter Cordelia, Kent, *and* Doctor

Cor. O thou good Kent, how shall I live and work,
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
And every measure fail me.

Kent. To be acknowledged, madam, is o'erpaid.
All my reports go with the modest truth;

Nor more nor clipp'd, but so.

Cor. Be better suited:
These weeds are memories of those worser hours:
I prithee, put them off.

Kent. Pardon me, dear madam;
Yet to be known shortens my made intent:
My boon I make it, that you know me not
Till time and I think meet.

Cor. Then be 't so, my good lord. [*To the Doctor*] How does the king?

Doct. Madam, sleeps still.

Cor. O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
The untuned and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changed father!

Doct. So please your majesty
That we may wake the king: he hath slept long.

Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?

Gent. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep
We put fresh garments on him.

Doct. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him
I doubt not of his temperance.

Cor. Very well.

Doct. Please you, draw near. Louder the music there!

Cor. O my dear father! Restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!

Kent. Kind and dear princess!

Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes

Had challenged pity of them. Was this a face
To be opposed against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross lightning? to watch — poor perdu! —
With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
'T is wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all. He wakes; speak to him.

Doct. Madam, do you; 't is fittest.

Cor. How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?

Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave:
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

Cor. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know: when did you die?

Cor. Still, still, far wide!

Doct. He 's scarce awake: let him alone awhile.

Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?
I am mightily abused. I should e'en die with pity,

To see another thus. I know not what to say.
I will not swear these are my hands: let 's see;
I feel this pin prick. Would I were assured
Of my condition!
Cor. O, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me:
No, sir, you must not kneel.
Lear. Pray, do not mock me:
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;
And, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;
Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.
Cor. And so I am, I am.
Lear. Be your tears wet? yes, 'faith. I pray, weep not:
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.
Cor. No cause, no cause.
Lear. Am I in France?
Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.
Lear. Do not abuse me.
Doct. Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,

You see, is kill'd in him: and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.
Desire him to go in: trouble him no more
Till further settling.

Cor. Will 't please your highness, walk?

Lear. You must bear with me:
Pray you now, forget and forgive: I am old and foolish.

[*Exeunt all but Kent and Gentleman.*

Gent. Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?

Kent. Most certain, sir.

Gent. Who is conductor of his people?

Kent. As 't is said, the bastard son of Gloucester.

Gent. They say Edgar, his banished son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany.

Kent. Report is changeable. 'T is time to look about; the powers of the kingdom approach apace.

Gent. The arbitrement is like to be bloody. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,
Or well or ill, as this day's battle 's fought. [*Exit.*

ACT V

Scene I — *The British camp near Dover*

Enter, with drum and colours, Edmund, Regan, Gentlemen, *and* Soldiers

Edm. Know of the duke if his last purpose hold,
Or whether since he is advised by aught

To change the course: he 's full of alteration
And self-reproving: bring his constant pleasure.
[*To a Gentleman, who goes out.*

Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

Edm. 'T is to be doubted, madam.

Reg. Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you:
Tell me — but truly — but then speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister?

Edm. In honour'd love.

Reg. But have you never found my brother's way
To the forfended place?

Edm. That thought abuses you.

Reg. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.

Edm. No, by mine honour, madam.

Reg. I never shall endure her: dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

Edm. Fear me not:
She and the duke her husband!

Enter, with drum and colours, Albany, Goneril, *and* Soldiers

Gon. [*Aside*] I had rather lose the battle than that sister
Should loosen him and me.

Alb. Our very loving sister, well be-met.
Sir, this I hear; the king is come to his daughter,
With others whom the rigour of our state
Forced to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant: for this business,

It toucheth us, as France invades our land,
Not bolds the king, with others, whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.

Edm. Sir, you speak nobly.

Reg. Why is this reason'd?

Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils
Are not the question here.

Alb. Let 's then determine
With the ancient of war on our proceedings.

Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.

Reg. Sister, you 'll go with us?

Gon. No.

Reg. 'T is most convenient; pray you, go with us.

Gon. [*Aside*] O, ho, I know the riddle. — I will go.

As they are going out, enter Edgar *disguised*

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.

Alb. I 'll overtake you. Speak.

[*Exeunt all but Albany and Edgar.*

Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,

And machination ceases. Fortune love you!

Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.

Edg. I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I 'll appear again.

Alb. Why, fare thee well: I will o'erlook thy paper. [*Exit Edgar.*

Re-enter Edmund

Edm. The enemy 's in view; draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
By diligent discovery; but your haste
Is now urged on you.

Alb. We will greet the time. [*Exit.*

Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both? one? or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive: to take the widow
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being alive. Now then we 'll use
His countenance for the battle; which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon; for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate. [*Exit.*

Scene II — *A field between the two camps*

Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colours, Lear, Cordelia, *and* Soldiers, *over the stage; and exeunt*

Enter Edgar *and* Gloucester

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host; pray that the right may thrive:
If ever I return to you again,
I 'll bring you comfort.
Glou. Grace go with you, sir! [*Exit Edgar.*

Alarum and retreat within. Re-enter Edgar

Edg. Away, old man; give me thy hand; away!
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en:
Give me thy hand; come on.
Glou. No farther, sir; a man may rot even here.
Edg. What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither: 10
Ripeness is all: come on.
Glou. And that 's true too. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III — *The British camp near Dover*

Enter, in conquest, with drum and colours, Edmund; Lear *and* Cordelia, *prisoners;* Captain, Soldiers, &c.

Edm. Some officers take them away: good guard,
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.
Cor. We are not the first

Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.
For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down;
Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.
Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?
Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let 's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I 'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness: so we 'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we 'll talk with them too,
Who loses and who wins; who 's in, who 's out;
And take upon 's the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies: and we 'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon.
Edm. Take them away.
Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
He that parts us shall bring a brand from heavens,
And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes;
The good-years shall devour them, flesh and fell,
Ere they shall make us weep: we 'll see 'em starve first.
Come. [*Exeunt Lear and Cordelia, guarded.*
Edm. Come hither, captain; hark.
Take thou this note [*giving a paper*]; go follow them to prison:
One step I have advanced thee; if thou dost
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way

To noble fortunes: know thou this, that men
Are as the time is: to be tender-minded
Does not become a sword: thy great employment
Will not bear question: either say thou 'lt do 't,
Or thrive by other means.

Capt. I 'll do 't, my lord.

Edm. About it; and write happy when thou hast done.
Mark, I say, instantly; and carry it so
As I have set it down.

Capt. I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If it be man's work, I 'll do 't. [*Exit.*

Flourish. *Enter* Albany, Goneril, Regan, *another* Captain, *and* Soldiers

Alb. Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well: you have the captives
That were the opposites of this day's strife:
We do require them of you, so to use them
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.

Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention and appointed guard;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the queen;
My reason all the same; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear

Where you shall hold your session. At this time
We sweat and bleed: the friend hath lost his friend;
And the best quarrels, in the heat, are cursed
By those that feel their sharpness:
The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.

Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.

Reg. That 's as we list to grace him.
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers;
Bore the commission of my place and person;
The which immediacy may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.

Gon. Not so hot:
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
More than in your addition.

Reg. In my rights,
By me invested, he compeers the best.

Gon. That were the most, if he should husband you.

Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.

Gon. Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.

Reg. Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach. General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony;
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine:
Witness the world, that I create thee here
My lord and master.

Gon. Mean you to enjoy him?

Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.
Edm. Nor in thine, lord.
Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes.
Reg. [*To Edmund*] Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine.
Alb. Stay yet; hear reason. Edmund, I arrest thee
On capital treason; and, in thine attaint,
This gilded serpent [*pointing to Goneril*]. For your claim, fair sister,
I bar it in the interest of my wife;
'T is she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
If you will marry, make your loves to me,
My lady is bespoke.
Gon. An interlude!
Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloucester: let the trumpet sound:
If none appear to prove upon thy head
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge [*throwing down a glove*]; I 'll prove it on thy heart,
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.
Reg. Sick, O, sick!
Gon. [*Aside*] If not, I 'll ne'er trust medicine.
Edm. There 's my exchange [*throwing down a glove*]: what in the world he is
That names me traitor, villain-like he lies:
Call by thy trumpet: he that dares approach,
On him, on you, who not? I will maintain
My truth and honour firmly.

Alb. A herald, ho!
Edm. A herald, ho, a herald!
Alb. Trust to thy single virtue; for thy soldiers,
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.
Reg. My sickness grows upon me.
Alb. She is not well; convey her to my tent.
[*Exit Regan, led.*

Enter a Herald

Come hither, herald, — Let the trumpet sound, —
And read out this.
Capt. Sound, trumpet! [*A trumpet sounds.*
Her. [*Reads*] "If any man of quality or degree within the lists of the army will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third sound of the trumpet: he is bold in his defence."
Edm. Sound! [*First trumpet.*
Her. Again! [*Second trumpet.*
Her. Again! [*Third trumpet.*
[*Trumpet answers within.*

Enter EDGAR, *at the third sound, armed, with a trumpet before him*

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' the trumpet.
Her. What are you?
Your name, your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?
Edg. Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit:
Yet am I noble as the adversary

I come to cope.

Alb. Which is that adversary?

Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund Earl of Gloucester?

Edm. Himself: what say'st thou to him?

Edg. Draw thy sword,
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice: here is mine.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,
My oath, and my profession: I protest,
Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,
Thy valour and thy heart, thou art a traitor;
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;
Conspirant 'gainst this high-illustrious prince;
And, from the extremest upward of thy head
To the descent and dust below thy foot,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou "No,"
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.

Edm. In wisdom I should ask thy name;
But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike
And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn:
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart;
Which, for they yet glance by and scarcely bruise,
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever. Trumpets, speak!

[*Alarums. They fight. Edmund falls.*

Alb. Save him, save him!
Gon. This is practice, Gloucester:
By the law of arms thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite; thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguiled.
Alb. Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it. Hold, sir;
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil:
No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it.
[*Gives the letter to Edmund.*
Gon. Say, if I do, the laws are mine, not thine:
Who can arraign me for 't?
Alb. Most monstrous! oh!
Know'st thou this paper?
Gon. Ask me not what I know. [*Exit.*
Alb. Go after her: she 's desperate; govern her.
Edm. What you have charged me with, that have I done;
And more, much more; the time will bring it out:
'T is past, and so am I. But what art thou
That hast this fortune on me? If thou 'rt noble,
I do forgive thee.
Edg. Let 's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.
My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us:
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes.
Edm. Thou hast spoken right, 't is true;

The wheel is come full circle; I am here.
Alb. Methought thy very gait did prophesy
A royal nobleness: I must embrace thee:
Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I
Did hate thee or thy father:
Edg. Worthy prince, I know 't.
Alb. Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father?
Edg. By nursing them, my lord. List a brief tale;
And when 't is told, O, that my heart would burst!
The bloody proclamation to escape,
That follow'd me so near, — O, our lives' sweetness!
That we the pain of death would hourly die
Rather than die at once! — taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags; to assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd: and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost; became his guide,
Led him, begg'd for him, saved him from despair;
Never, — O fault! — reveal'd myself unto him,
Until some half-hour past, when I was arm'd:
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage: but his flaw'd heart, —
Alack, too weak the conflict to support! —
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.
Edm. This speech of yours hath moved me,
And shall perchance do good: but speak you on;
You look as you had something more to say.
Alb. If there be more, more woeful, hold it in;

For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.
Edg. This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamour came there in a man,
Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
Who 't was that so endured, with his strong arms
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he 'ld burst heaven; threw him on my father;
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
That ever ear received: which in recounting
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack: twice then the trumpets sounded,
And there I left him tranced.
Alb. But who was this?
Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise
Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service
Improper for a slave.

Enter a Gentleman, *with a bloody knife*

Gent. Help, help, O, help!
Edg. What kind of help?
Alb. Speak, man.
Edg. What means that bloody knife?
Gent. 'T is hot, it smokes;
It came even from the heart of — O, she's dead!
Alb. Who dead? speak, man.

Gent. Your lady, sir, your lady: and her sister
By her is poisoned; she hath confess'd it.
Edm. I was contracted to them both: all three
Now marry in an instant.
Edg. Here comes Kent.
Alb. Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead: 230
This judgement of the heavens, that makes us tremble,
Touches us not with pity. [*Exit Gentleman.*

Enter Kent

O, is this he?
The time will not allow the compliment
Which very manners urges.
Kent. I am come
To bid my king and master aye good night.
Is he not here?
Alb. Great thing of us forgot!
Speak, Edmund, where 's the king? and where 's Cordelia?
See'st thou this object, Kent?
[*The bodies of Goneril and Regan are brought in.*
Kent. Alack, why thus?
Edm. Yet Edmund was beloved:
The one the other poison'd for my sake, 240
And after slew herself.
Alb. Even so. Cover their faces.
Edm. I pant for life: some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,
Be brief in it, to the castle; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia:
Nay, send in time.

Alb. Run, run, O, run!
Edg. To who, my lord? Who hath the office? send
Thy token of reprieve.
Edm. Well thought on: take my sword,
Give it the captain.
Alb. Haste thee for thy life. [*Exit Edgar.*
Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.
Alb. The gods defend her! Bear him hence awhile. [*Edmund is borne off.*

Re-enter LEAR, *with* CORDELIA *dead in his arms;* EDGAR, Captain, *and others following*

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones:
Had I your tongues and eyes, I 'ld use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. She 's gone for ever!
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She 's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.
Kent. Is this the promised end?
Edg. Or image of that horror?
Alb. Fall, and cease!
Lear. This feather stirs: she lives! if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.

Kent. [*Kneeling*] O my good master!

Lear. Prithee, away.

Edg. 'T is noble Kent, your friend.

Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!

I might have saved her; now she 's gone for ever!
Cordelia, Cordelia! stay a little. Ha!
What is 't thou say'st? Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman.
I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging thee.

Capt. 'T is true, my lords, he did.

Lear. Did I not, fellow?
I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion
I would have made them skip: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me. Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' the best: I 'll tell you straight.

Kent. If fortune brag of two she loved and hated,

One of them we behold.

Lear. This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent?

Kent. The same,
Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?

Lear. He 's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He 'll strike, and quickly too: he 's dead and rotten.

Kent. No, my good lord; I am the very man, —

Lear. I 'll see that straight.

Kent. That, from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.

Lear. You are welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else: all 's cheerless, dark, and deadly.

Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves,
And desperately are dead.
Lear. Ay, so I think.
Alb. He knows not what he says: and vain it is
That we present us to him.
Edg. Very bootless.

Enter a Captain

Capt. Edmund is dead, my lord.
Alb. That 's but a trifle here.
You lords and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay may come
Shall be applied: for us, we will resign,
During the life of this old majesty,
To him our absolute power: [*To Edgar and Kent*]
you, to your rights;
With boot, and such addition as your honours
Have more than merited. All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings. O, see, see!
Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life!
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou 'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!
Pray you, undo this button: thank you, sir.
Do you see this? Look on her, look, her lips,
Look there, look there! [*Dies.*
Edg. He faints! My lord, my lord!
Kent. Break, heart; I prithee, break!
Edg. Look up, my lord.

Kent. Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass! he hates him much
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

Edg. He is gone, indeed.

Kent. The wonder is, he hath endured so long:
He but usurp'd his life.

Alb. Bear them from hence. Our present business
Is general woe. [*To Kent and Edgar*] Friends of my soul, you twain
Rule in this realm, and the gored state sustain. 320

Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go;
My master calls me, I must not say no.

Edg. The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most: we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

[*Exeunt, with dead march.*

NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbott	Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar.*
F1	First Folio (1623) of Shakespeare's plays.
F2	Second Folio (1632).
F3	Third Folio (1663 and 1664).
F4	Fourth Folio (1685).
Ff	The four Folios.
Kellner . . .	Kellner's *Historical Outlines of English Syntax.*
O. E.	Old English (Anglo-Saxon).
M. E.	Middle English.
E. E.	Elizabethan English.
Mod. E. . . .	Modern English.
Q1	First Quarto (1608) of *King Lear.*
Q2	Second Quarto (1608 [?]1619).
Qq	The two Quartos.

For the meaning of words not given in these notes, the student is referred to the Glossary at the end of the volume.

The numbering of the lines corresponds to that of the Globe edition; this applies also to the scenes in prose.

Dramatis Personæ. This list is not in the Quartos or Folios. It was first given by Rowe (1709).

The division into acts and scenes is not marked in the Quartos.

ACT I — SCENE 1

The first scene of *King Lear* is of unusual importance. It both enacts the events on which the whole play is founded and brings out prominently the characters of all the principal actors. As a general rule the first scene is confined to giving information necessary for the understanding of the story; or it may, as in *Macbeth,* symbolize the drama. But in *King Lear*

we are introduced at once, without any preparation, to the circumstance on which the story turns. The play as a whole is the representation of the effects of its opening incidents. Goethe considered this scene "irrational" in its want of preparation.

1. ***affected***, had affection for, favored — the common meaning in Shakespeare. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, ii. 5. 28, "Maria once told me she did affect me."

5. ***equalities are so weighed***, . . . , their shares are so balanced that close scrutiny will not show one to be better than the other. For ***curiosity***, see Glossary.

11. ***brazed***, hardened. Cf. "brazen-faced."

18. ***proper***, handsome, as frequently in E. E.

20. ***some year***, a year or so, about a year. See i. 2. 5.

32. ***deserving***, *i.e.* to be better known by you.

33. ***out***, abroad, in foreign lands. Cf. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, i. 3. 7, "Put forth their sons to seek preferment out."

37. ***our darker purpose***, our more secret design. Lear makes a full statement of what is already known by Kent and Gloucester.

39. ***fast intent***, fixed intention; synonymous with "constant will" in l. 44.

41–46. ***while we . . . now***. Omitted in the Qq.

54. ***challenge***, claim as due: "where there are both the claims of nature (*i.e.* of birth) and merit." Cf. iv. 7. 31.

56. ***wield the matter***, express.

62. ***Beyond all manner of so much***, beyond all such comparisons.

65. ***shadowy***, shady.

73. ***names my very deed of love***, states exactly my love; expresses my love in very deed.

76. ***the most precious square of sense***, the most exquisitely sensitive part of our nature.

77. ***felicitate***, made happy. Regan's protestations are as forced as Goneril's. Her stilted phraseology betokens her insincerity. It is in ominous contrast to the simplicity of all that Cordelia can bring herself to say.

80. ***more ponderous***. So the Ff. The Qq read *more richer*. The double comparative and superlative (*e.g.* l. 219) were commonly used in E. E. to give emphasis.

83. ***validity***, value, worth; not in the modern sense of "good title."

85. *Although the last, not least.* This phrase occurs also in *Julius Cæsar*, iii. 1. 189, "Though last, not least in love"; and there are several other instances of it in Elizabethan literature.

The Ff read, "Our last and least," which is preferred by some editors; while the Qq have "Although the last, not least in our dear love," but omit from *to whose young love* to *interess'd*. The usual reading of this passage is therefore founded on both texts.

86. *milk*: referring to the rich pasture land of Burgundy.

87. *interess'd*. See Glossary for unusual words.

92. *Nothing will come of nothing*. Cf. i. 4. 145–146, and the proverb, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*.

95. *bond*, bounden duty, obligation.

97. *Good my lord*, a common form of transposition when the possessive is unemphatic. Cf. l. 122 and iii. 2. 61. The transposition occurs most commonly when the address begins a sentence; contrast ii. 1. 111, iv. 2. 70 and 91.

102. *all*, exclusively, only. So also l. 106.

109. All that Cordelia says has the sincerity and abrupt simplicity inevitable on being goaded to give expression to feelings too heartfelt for words. It has been remarked by some critics that Cordelia's conduct bears in its tactless obstinacy traces of her father's headstrong nature. Coleridge, for instance, says: "There is something of disgust at the ruthless hypocrisy of her sisters, and some little faulty admixture of pride and sullenness in Cordelia's 'Nothing'; and her tone is well contrived, indeed, to lessen the glaring absurdity of Lear's conduct." But the prevailing note of her character is simplicity and truth. She feels so deeply that she is unable to frame a formal statement of her love for her father, and she is the less able to do so from her abhorrence of her sisters' rank insincerity.

110. Wounded vanity is the cause of Lear's anger. He had already determined on a division of his kingdom among his three daughters. He says definitely, on his very entrance, "we *have* divided in three our kingdom," and Kent and Gloucester have already discussed two of the shares. But that his vanity may be ministered unto, he wishes to hear the professions of his daughters' love. "The trial is but a trick," says Coleridge; "the grossness of the old king's rage is in part the natural result of a silly trick suddenly and most unexpectedly baffled and disappointed."

112. ***Hecate***, the goddess in classical mythology of enchantments and sorcery. In the Middle Ages she was regarded as the queen of witches. Cf. *Macbeth*, ii. 1. 52 and iii. 5. The word is pronounced as a dissyllable in Shakespeare.

113. ***operation of the orbs***, influence of the stars.

116. ***property***, equivalent to " identity." Cf. *proper*, iv. 2. 60.

119. ***generation***, generally said to mean " offspring," as in the phrase " generation of vipers," *St. Matthew*, iii. 7, etc. It is plausibly suggested by Mr. W. J. Craig, however, that *generation* may here mean parents, as *progeny* does in *Coriolanus*, i. 8. 12. " Though Purchas in his *Pilgrimes* has a curious passage mentioning different kinds of cannibalism, he does not mention eating of children by their parents, nor do I know any reference to it. On the other hand, Herodotus tells us that the Scythians ate their aged and impotent relations, and Chapman in *Byron's Tragedy*, iv. 1, has the following passage: ' to teach . . . The Scythians to inter not *eat* their parents.' "

125–126. ***to set my rest On her kind nursery***. This appears to have a double meaning. " To set one's rest " is a phrase used in the game of primero, meaning " to stake all upon the cards in one's hand," and hence it came to mean generally to stake one's all. *To set my rest on her kind nursery* would therefore mean " to rely absolutely on her care." But it is probable that Shakespeare had the simpler interpretation also in view, viz. " to find rest for my old age with her." There is a similar usage in *Romeo and Juliet*, v. 3. 110, " O here Will I set up my everlasting rest "; and in this the phrase cannot well have the first meaning exclusively.

126. ***nursery***, nursing.

Hence, and avoid my sight! Addressed to Cordelia.

130. ***digest***, divide, dispose of. See Glossary.

131. Let her pride find her a husband, as she won't have a dowry to do so.

133. ***effects***, signs, manifestations. Cf. ii. 4. 182.

138. ***additions***, titles, as commonly in Shakespeare. Cf. ii. 2. 26 and v. 3. 68.

141. ***This coronet***: referring to the one originally intended for Cordelia.

145. ***make from***, get out of the way of.

146. ***the fork***, the barbed arrow-head.

147. " Almost the first burst of that noble tide of passion which runs through the play is in the remonstrance of Kent

to his royal master on the injustice of his sentence against his youngest daughter: 'Be Kent unmannerly, when Lear is mad!' This manly plainness, which draws down on him the displeasure of the unadvised king, is worthy of the fidelity with which he adheres to his fallen fortunes" (Hazlitt).

151. *Reverse thy doom* (change your sentence) is the reading of the Qq; the Ff have *Reserve thy state*, retain your royal power.

153. *answer my life my judgement*, let my life answer for my judgment.

161. *blank*, literally the white centre of a target.

163. *swear'st*, adjurest, swearest by. For the omission of the preposition, cf. ii. 2. 88, and see Abbott, § 200.

175. *our potency made good*, our royal authority being maintained.

"Kent's opposition . . . displays Lear's moral incapability of resigning the sovereign power in the very act of disposing of it" (Coleridge).

177. *diseases*, discomforts, absence of ease.

187. *approve*, justify, confirm, as commonly in E. E. Cf. ii. 2. 167, ii. 4. 187, and iii. 5. 12.

191. *Here's France and Burgundy*. For the common Shakespearean use of a singular verb preceding a plural subject, see Abbott, § 335.

193–194. *you who . . . Hath*. A singular verb often follows a relative whose antecedent is plural. Cf. *stirs*, ii. 4. 277, and see Abbott, § 247.

199. *so*, *i.e.* "dear," with the meaning "of high price."

201. *that little seeming substance*. A difficult phrase. Johnson takes *seeming* in the sense of *beautiful*, *little seeming* being thus equivalent to *ugly;* Steevens and Schmidt give it the sense of *specious;* while Wright understands it to mean *in appearance*. The second interpretation is the best. There appears to be little point in "that substance which is but little in appearance," and Johnson's explanation is forced.

203. *like*, please, as commonly in E. E. Cf. ii. 2. 96.

205. *owes*, possesses.

209. *makes not up*, does not decide. "There is no choice on such conditions."

212. *make such a stray*, stray so far.

213. *To match*. For the omission of *as*, see Abbott, § 281, and cf. l. 220.

beseech, *i.e.* I beseech. "The Elizabethan authors objected

to scarcely any ellipsis, provided the deficiency could be easily supplied from the context." See Abbott, §§ 399–401. Cf. ii. 4. 42 and v. 1. 68.

218. ***argument***, theme, subject; as commonly in E. E.

223. ***monsters it***, makes it monstrous. A similar use occurs in *Coriolanus*, ii. 2. 81: "idly sit To hear my nothings monster'd."

224. ***Fall'n into taint***, (must have) fallen into decay.

227. ***for***, because.

234. ***still-soliciting***, ever-begging. Cf. i. 4. 353, ii. 4. 107, and *The Tempest*, i. 2. 229, "the still-vex'd Bermoothes."

242. ***regards***, considerations. Cf. l. 251.

243. ***the entire point***, the sole consideration, the object of pure love.

253–264. France's tender declaration appears the more beautiful by contrast with the prosaic selfish remarks of his rival, who has amply merited Cordelia's "Peace be with Burgundy!"

261. ***waterish***, well-watered; used in contempt.

262. ***unprized***, beyond price. "The suffix *-ed* in past participles had in E. E. gone far to acquire the sense of 'what may be done' in addition to that of 'what has been done.' For the most part this heightened meaning occurs in combination with a *negative prefix*" (Herford). Cf. *untented*, i. 4. 322; *unnumber'd*, iv. 6. 21; and *undistinguish'd*, iv. 6. 278. *Unprized* may, however, be used here in the simple sense of "not prized."

264. ***here*** and ***where*** are used as nouns.

271. Cordelia from the first has seen through her sisters' deceit; but pity for her father, despite the wrong he has done her, at last forces her to speak plainly. Note how she has gradually worked herself up to this declaration.

The jewels of our father, in apposition with "you."

with wash'd eyes, *i.e.* with tears.

275. ***professed***, full of professions. For this active sense of the past participle, cf. *better spoken*, iv. 6. 10, and see Kellner, § 408.

277. ***prefer***, recommend, direct; as commonly in Shakespeare.

279. As Hazlitt remarks, the true character of the two eldest daughters, who have not spoken since the very beginning of the love test, breaks out in Regan's answer to Cordelia, "their hatred of advice being in proportion to their determination to do wrong, and to their hypocritical pretensions to do right." But most striking of all is Goneril's odious self-righteousness in telling her sister "You have obedience scanted."

281. *At*, used in statements of price or value; hence, "as an alms of fortune."

282. This line presents some difficulty. It is best rendered thus, "And well deserve that absence of affection from your father which you have shown towards him." It is possible, however, to take *want* as referring specifically to the dowry, and in this case, as Wright says, *the want that you have wanted* would be an instance of a verb and its cognate accusative.

286–312. The closing dialogue of this scene shows Goneril to be the stronger and more assertive of the two sisters. It is she who broaches the discussion of their position, and declares, when Regan purposes merely to "think" on their policy, that they must strike while the iron is hot. But the dialogue is also of considerable importance in the structure of the play, as it serves to prepare us for Lear's fate. The very waywardness to which they owe their fortunes they make a reason for their treacherous design to deprive him of authority. Lear's faults, it appears, are not due to senility, though this has aggravated them, for he "hath ever but slenderly known himself," and "the best and soundest years of his life have been but rash."

Note the change from verse to prose. We pass with it from the higher plane of passion to that of underhand scheming.

295. *grossly*, plainly, evidently.

304. *like*, likely. Cf. iv. 2. 19.

310. *offend*, harm.

SCENE 2

In the second scene we turn to the minor web of the play, the Gloucester story, which has already been indicated by the opening conversation of the previous scene. This underplot is in striking parallelism with the main story, and each in turn acts as a foil to the other. See Introduction, p. xv.

1. *Thou, nature, art my goddess*, as he is a natural son.

3. *Stand in the plague of custom*, be subject to the injustice of custom.

4. *curiosity*, scruples. See Glossary.

6. *Lag of*, later than.

8. *generous*: used in the obsolete sense of "gallant," "noble," "natural to one of noble birth or spirit."

21. *top the*. The commonly accepted emendation of the old

reading *to the*. It is supported by several other passages in Shakespeare, *e.g.* v. 3. 207.

24. ***subscribed***, surrendered; literally "signed away." Cf. *subscription*, iii. 2. 18.

25. ***exhibition***, allowance.

26. ***Upon the gad***, suddenly, as if pricked by a gad (*i.e.* a goad). Cf. "upon the spur of the moment."

32. ***terrible***, terrified.

48. ***policy and reverence of age***, *i.e.* policy of reverencing age. Cf. other instances of this figure of speech — hendiadys — in ll. 191–192, "image and horror," and i. 4. 364, "This milky gentleness and course."

49. ***the best of our times***, the best part of our lives, as in i. 1. 298 and i. 2. 122.

53. ***suffered***, allowed, endured.

89. ***where***, whereas, as commonly in Shakespeare.

93. ***wrote***. Cf. *mistook*, ii. 4. 12; *fell*, iv. 6. 54; and see Abbott, §§ 343, 344.

94. ***pretence of danger***, dangerous intention. Cf. i. 4. 75.

106. ***wind me into him***, worm yourself into his confidence. *Me* is an ethical dative. Cf. iv. 6. 88.

107–108. ***I would unstate myself***, . . . I should give up my position and dignity in order to be certain how matters stand.

109. ***convey***, discharge, carry out; commonly with a notion of secrecy.

111–127. As Wright has pointed out, this passage may have been suggested by the eclipses of the sun and moon in September and October, 1605. See Introduction, p. ix.

There is perhaps a reference to the Gunpowder Plot (Nov. 5, 1605) in the words "in palaces, treason" and "machinations, hollowness, treachery."

113–114. ***though the wisdom of nature*** . . . "Though natural philosophy can give account of eclipses, yet we feel their consequences" (Johnson).

119–124. ***This villain*** . . . ***graves***. Omitted in the Qq.

120–121. ***bias of nature***, *i.e.* natural bias or inclination.

126–127. Gloucester's superstitiousness has made him an easy prey to Edmund's cunning. His reference to the injustice done to Kent gives point to the folly of his own credulity. Lear was no more unjust to the "noble and true-hearted Kent" than Gloucester himself is to Edgar.

128. *foppery*, folly, the original meaning of *fop* being a "fool." Cf. *foppish*, i. 4. 182.

133–134. *spherical predominance*, synonymous with "planetary influence."

136. *divine thrusting on*, impulse from above.

146. *pat he comes like the catastrophe . . .* An allusion to the clumsy structure of the early comedies, in which the conclusion seemed to come by chance at the very moment it was wanted.

148. *Tom o' Bedlam.* See ii. 3. 14. Thanks to Edmund's treachery, Tom o' Bedlam is yet to be Edgar's cue.

157. *succeed*, ensue, turn out; used, like the noun success, indifferently of good or bad consequences. Cf. "this good success," v. 3. 194.

157–166. *as of . . . Come, come.* Omitted in the Ff.

161. *diffidences*, suspicions, distrust; now used only of distrust of one's self.

161–162. *dissipation of cohorts.* Probably corrupt; the phrase does not suit the context, and neither of the words occurs elsewhere in Shakespeare. Of the emendations that have been suggested, the best is "disputation of consorts" (Craig).

164–165. *a sectary astronomical*, a devotee of astrology.

178–179. *with the mischief . . . allay*, would scarcely be allayed even by doing harm to your person.

181–187. *I pray you . . . Armed, brother!* Omitted in the Qq.

185. *ye* is strictly a nominative, but it is frequently used in E. E., and especially by the dramatists, instead of the objective *you*. Cf. i. 4. 324 and ii. 2. 50.

191–192. *image and horror.* See note on l. 48, above.

198. *practices*, plots, artifices; a common sense in E. E. Cf. ii. 1. 75, 109, etc., and *practised*, iii. 2. 57, etc.

SCENE 3

This scene takes up the main thread of the story and follows directly on the closing dialogue of scene 1. In the interval Goneril is fully instated in her new power, and has gained confidence in her ability to deprive Lear of the remnants of his authority.

1. *for chiding of.* See note on ii. 1. 41.

10. *answer*, answer for. Cf. i. 1. 153.

20. *With checks as flatteries*, . . . The line is best rendered, " With rebukes instead of flatteries, when flatteries are seen to feed their folly." *As* has the force of " instead of " rather than of " as well as." *They* in the second half of the line is sometimes taken to refer to " old fools," *i.e.* " when old fools are seen to be deceived." Possibly the line is corrupt. Ll. 16–20 are omitted in the Ff.

24. Goneril has more initiative than her sister. It is she who " breeds occasion " to humble Lear completely, and she dictates her sister's policy also.

SCENE 4

Lear comes to realize the position in which he has placed himself. Hitherto he has appeared merely hasty, wayward, and imperious, but now we begin to see the better elements of his character. The pathos of his lot is emphasized by the solicitude of Kent and the significant utterances of the Fool, and he wins our sympathy.

2. *defuse*, confuse, hence disguise; an obsolete form of *diffuse*.

12. *What dost thou profess?* What is thy profession? Note the play on the word in Kent's reply.

16. *converse*, associate; the common meaning in Shakespeare.

18. *to eat no fish*. Warburton explained this as a reference to the Roman Catholic custom of eating fish on Fridays. " In Queen Elizabeth's time the Papists were esteemed enemies to the government. Hence the proverbial phrase of ' He's an honest man and eats no fish,' to signify he's a friend to the government and a Protestant." Capell explained it as meaning that Kent was " no lover of such meagre diet as fish." Cf. 2 *Henry IV*, iv. 3. 99; but this gives the phrase little point. If Warburton's explanation is correct, Kent uses this phrase as an indirect way of expressing his loyalty.

26. *Who*. See Abbott, § 274. Cf. iv. i. 47.

35. *curious*, complicated. See Glossary.

51. *clotpoll*, blockhead, " clod-pate." The form " clodpole " occurs in *Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 208.

59. *roundest*, plainest. Cf. *Othello*, 1. 3. 90, " a round unvarnished tale "; and *Twelfth Night*, ii. 3. 102, " I must be round with you."

64. For the construction, see note on iii. 2. 13.

72–78. We have here the first indication of Lear's finer qualities. Though hasty in temper, he is at least generous. Sooner than believe in any purposed unkindness, he blames his own suspicions.

73. *faint*, cold, indifferent, half-hearted.

75. *pretence*, offer. It is commonly synonymous with *purpose* (*e.g.* i. 2. 95), but here it has a stronger force.

77–78. *this two days*, a common Shakespearean usage.

81. In Lear's " No more of that," etc., we detect the first hint of his regret for his treatment of Cordelia.

107. The Fool plays a very important part in *King Lear*. He is not to be regarded as an accessory suited to the public taste, and he has a higher function than merely to relieve the intensity of the situation. His rambling remarks do relax the strain on our feelings, but their chief effect is, by reason of their deep significance, to heighten the pathos. See Introduction p. xvii.

coxcomb, the Fool's cap.

111. *you were best*, a common construction in E. E. It is a corrupted survival of an O. E. usage, in which *you* is the dative and the whole phrase is impersonal. That Shakespeare used *you* as a nominative may be seen from such lines as " I were better to be eaten to death," *2 Henry IV*, i. 2. 245, and " She were better love a dream," *Twelfth Night*, ii. 2. 27. Cf. iii. 4. 105.

114. *on's*, a euphonic contraction of *of his*. See Abbott, § 182. Cf. i. 5. 20, and *on't*, l. 168 below.

117. *nuncle*, the customary address of a fool to his master; a contraction of *mine uncle*.

125. *Lady the brach*, *i.e.* the bitch-hound. Cf. iii. 6. 72.

131. *showest*, seemest to have. Cf. *shows* (appears), l. 265.

133. *owest*, *i.e.* ownest. Cf. i. 1. 205.

134. *goest*, *i.e.* walkest, as often in Shakespeare.

135. *Learn more than thou trowest.* Don't believe all you hear.

136. *Set*, stake, offer wagers at dice. Cf. *Richard II*, iv. 1. 57, " Who sets me else? by heaven I'll throw at all " (*i.e.* who else lays down stakes, challenges me). The meaning seems to be, " offer lower wagers than your dice-throws bring to you, than you win at a throw," or " stake lower than the chances of your game,"

143–144. ***Can you make no use of nothing?*** The Fool suggests that his lines have a significance which Lear has not realized. Kent is the first to see that "this is not altogether fool."

154–169. ***That lord . . . snatching.*** Omitted in the Ff. Johnson suggests that there was perhaps a political reason in their omission, "as they seemed to censure the monopolies"; but this objection does not apply to the Fool's verses.

The first two verses are explained by a passage in the old play, *King Leir*. See Introduction, pp. xiii.

167. ***monopoly.*** "A satire on the gross abuses of monopolies at that time, and the corruption and avarice of the courtiers, who commonly went shares with the patentee" (Warburton).

out, taken out, granted to me.

176–177. ***thou borest thy ass on thy back.*** An allusion to Æsop's fable.

179. ***like myself***, *i.e.* like a fool. He again insists on his seriousness.

181–184. "There never was a time when fools were less in favour; and the reason is, that they were never so little wanted, for wise men now supply their place" (Johnson).

182. ***foppish***, foolish. Cf. *foppery*, i. 2. 128.

191–192. These two lines, like several others farther on, are probably taken from an old song. Steevens points out a similar couplet in Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece* (1608):

> "When Tarquin first in court began,
> And was approved king,
> Some men for sudden joy 'gan weep,
> But I for sorrow sing."

208. ***frontlet***, literally a band worn on the forehead; here used metaphorically for "frown."

211–212. ***an O***, a mere cipher, of no value unless joined to a figure.

219. ***shealed***, shelled. This form survives in Scotch and in provincial English.

221. ***other***, *i.e.* others. *Other* is now plural only when it is used attributively (*e.g.* other men). In O. E. *other* was used in both numbers, the plural form being *othre*. The final *e* was dropped in time; hence the E. E. plural form *other*, which is

found in the authorized version of the Bible along with the modern form *others* (see *St. Luke*, xxiii. 32).

227. ***put on***, encourage. Cf. note on ii. 1. 101.

228. ***allowance***, approval.

229–233. ***nor the redresses sleep***. . . , nor would the punishment (for the riotous conduct of your retinue) fail to be put into operation, which punishment, given to preserve soundly the peace of the commonwealth, might in its course give you an affront that would be a shame under other circumstances, but which under these necessarily would be called a well chosen procedure.

230. ***tender***, care, tendance. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, v. 4. 49, " thou makest some tender of my life."

weal, commonwealth.

233. The somewhat embarrassed syntax and the indirect expressions betoken Goneril's hesitation. Her statements have been direct enough while she merely objected to Lear's conduct. Now for the first time she threatens him to his face.

236. ***it***. This possessive form is of fairly common occurrence in E. E. Cf. iv. 2. 32. The ordinary neuter possessive in E. E. is *his*. *Its* is not found in Spenser, and occurs very seldom in Shakespeare (*e.g. Henry VIII*, i. 1. 18), but it began about this time to replace *his*. For the form *it*, cf. the West Midland uninflected genitive *hit*. See Abbott, § 228.

Sir Joshua Reynolds remarks on the incoherent words with which Shakespeare often finishes this Fool's speeches: " We may suppose that they had a custom of taking off the edge of too sharp a speech by covering it hastily with the end of an old song, or any glib nonsense that came into mind." This may apply to " Whoop, Jug! I love thee " in l. 245; but in the present case there is a very pertinent meaning in the " glib nonsense."

237. A similar figure of speech occurs in Spenser's story of Lear, *Faërie Queene*, ii. 10. 30. See Appendix A.

245. ***Jug***, a colloquial name for a sweetheart or mistress, derivatively a substitute for the feminine name Joan or Joanna. According to Steevens, " Whoop, Jug! I love thee " is a quotation from an old song.

248. ***notion***, understanding, intellect; the only meaning of the word in Shakespeare.

Lear's awakening is so sudden that he can hardly believe his senses. This reference to his intellect is prophetic. It is the first hint of his madness.

252–254. On hearing the Fool's reply, Lear says he should like to know if he is only Lear's shadow. His marks of sovereignty, his knowledge, and his reason all tell him that he is Lear himself, and therefore the father of Goneril, but he may be falsely persuaded to that effect. This passage is omitted in the Ff.

Note the change, from this juncture, in Lear's attitude toward the Fool.

255. ***Which***, whom. See Abbott, § 266.

258. ***admiration***, astonishment, wonder.

265. ***Shows***, appears.

epicurism, sensuality, though found in E. E. also in the specialized sense of "gluttony."

267. ***graced***, honorable.

269. Goneril admits her own masterfulness. Her threats are no longer hesitating or cloaked in obscure phraseology.

271. ***depend***, attend on you, be dependants. For the construction, see Abbott, § 354.

277. Goneril's objection to the conduct of Lear's servants is no doubt justified. We are ready to believe that, on the principle of like master like man, they are impetuous and noisy. Goneril has the ability to avail herself of every opportunity of criticism, and to turn every fault, however small, into an excuse for her conduct.

283. ***sea-monster***. Cf. iv. 2. 50. This is often said to be the hippopotamus, which in Egyptian tradition was a monster of impiety and ingratitude. But as the hippopotamus does not live in the *sea*, some commentators think the reference is to the whale. Mr. Craig suggests that Shakespeare had not "any special kind of monster in his thoughts, but was thinking of those monsters of classical mythology slain by Hercules and by Perseus in defence of beauty — these stories were then very popular." Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, iii. 2. 57.

285. ***choice and rarest***, *i.e.* choicest and rarest, the superlative form applying to both; a common construction in E. E.

290. ***engine***, *i.e.* an engine of torture, the rack.

294. ***dear***, precious. *Dear* is used regularly in E. E. to express extremeness or intensity: thus "my dearest foe" = my greatest foe.

302. ***derogate***, deteriorated, debased.

305. ***thwart***, perverse.

disnatured, unnatural.

316. With characteristic masterfulness and deceit, Goneril had given orders for the number of Lear's followers to be decreased before desiring him " a little to disquantity his train." Before the threat was uttered, it had been carried out.

322. ***untented***, incurable; literally, not to be probed by a tent. See i. 1. 262.

324. ***Beweep***, *i.e.* if you beweep.

328. ***comfortable***, ready to comfort. Cf. ii. 2. 171.

334. Albany appears, at the beginning of the play, to be a mere puppet in the hands of Goneril. He has his qualms of conscience at her conduct, but is very reluctant to pass any criticism, and he is stopped short before he can do more than suggest his disapproval. But events show that he is not wanting in moral force.

345–356. ***This man . . . unfitness***, omitted in the Qq.

347. ***At point***, in readiness, fully equipped. Cf. iii. 1. 33.

348. ***buzz***, whisper, rumor.

353. ***taken***, *i.e.* by the harms.

360. ***full***, the adjective for the adverb. Cf. iv. 6. 3.

366. ***attask'd***, taken to task, blamed. The Ff read " at task."

369. Malone compares Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, ciii:

> " Were it not sinful then, striving to mend,
> To mar the subject that before was well? "

371. ***the event***, the issue; time will show.

SCENE 5

This scene contains little of importance to the action of the story. Its purpose is to convey a fuller sense of Lear's misfortune; and this is achieved by the subtle prattle of the Fool (who knows better than Lear how Regan will act), Lear's own involuntary reference to Cordelia (l. 24), and, above all, his foreboding of madness.

1. ***Gloucester***, probably the city, not the earl, whose castle was in its vicinity.

2. ***Acquaint my daughter no further.*** Contrast Goneril's instruction to Oswald in the preceding scene.

8. ***brains***, used in the singular, as elsewhere occasionally in Shakespeare. Cf. *All's Well*, iii. 2. 16, " The brains of my Cupid's knocked out."

11–12. *I.e.* as you have no brains, you run no risk of kibes and therefore of needing to wear slippers.

kibes, sores on the heels; also chilblains.

15. ***kindly***: used equivocally with the two meanings " with kindness " and " after her nature."

crab, crab apple.

25. ***I did her wrong.*** " This and Lear's subsequent ejaculations to himself are in verse; his distracted replies to the Fool in prose " (Herford).

36. ***Be***: generally used in E. E. to express doubt (*a*) in questions, and (*b*) after verbs of thinking. See Abbott, § 299.

38. ***the seven stars***, the Pleiades.

43. ***To take't again perforce!*** " He is meditating on the resumption of his royalty." This is the interpretation of Johnson, which is better than that of Steevens, to the effect that he is thinking of his daughter's having so violently deprived him of the privileges she had agreed to grant him.

50. " The mind's own anticipation of madness! The deepest tragic notes are often struck by a half sense of an impending blow " (Coleridge).

ACT II — SCENE 1

The minor thread of the story is again taken up, and is now interwoven with the principal one. Edmund, after succeeding in his plot to turn his father against Edgar, fitly joins the party of Regan and Cornwall.

1. ***Save thee***, *i.e.* God save thee — a common form of salutation.

8. ***news***: used indifferently in E. E. in the singular (as in 89, 90) and plural (as here).

9. ***ear-kissing***, whispered. ***arguments***, cf. i. 1. 218.

12. ***toward***, near at hand. Cf. iii. 3. 20 and iv. 6. 213.

One of Lear's objects in dividing his kingdom, it will be remembered, was " that future strife may be prevented now " (i. 1. 46).

19. ***of a queasy question***, requiring delicate handling; ***queasy***, strictly " squeamish," " sickly."

20. ***briefness***, promptitude.

28. ***Upon his party.*** The usual explanation of this line is that Edmund, in order to confuse his brother and alarm him to a speedy flight, asks Edgar whether he has not spoken

against the Duke of Cornwall, and then, reversing the question, asks whether he has not spoken against the Duke of Albany. *Upon his party* elsewhere in Shakespeare invariably means "on his side" (cf. iv. 6. 256). But this is not an insuperable obstacle to the simpler interpretation, "Have you said nothing upon the party formed by him against the Duke of Albany?"

33. ***Yield . . . here.*** Spoken loudly, so that Gloucester may hear.

41. Edmund knows how to turn to account Gloucester's superstitiousness.

Mumbling of. The preposition *of* shows *mumbling* to have the force of a verbal noun. The full construction would be *on mumbling of;* cf. *for chiding of*, i. 3. 1. But in E. E. the verbal noun was influenced by the present participle; hence the omission of the anterior preposition here, and of the posterior preposition in v. 3. 274, *a-hanging thee.*

48. ***bend,*** direct. Cf. iv. 2. 74.

51. ***loathly,*** with abhorrence, loathingly.

52. ***motion,*** a fencing term for "attack," "thrust."

54. ***lanced*** (for the Quarto's *lancht*). The Ff have *latch'd,* caught.

61. ***arch,*** master, chief; a substantival use of the adjective.

67. ***pight,*** determined, resolved; an old past tense of *pitch.* Cf. *Troilus and Cressida,* v. 10. 24:

> "You vile abominable tents,
> Thus proudly pight upon our Phrygian plains."

curst, angry, sharp; the same word as *cursed.*

69. ***Thou unpossessing bastard.*** "Thus the secret poison in Edmund's own heart steals forth; and then observe poor Gloucester's 'Loyal and *natural* boy,' as if praising the crime of Edmund's birth" (Coleridge).

unpossessing: since a bastard cannot inherit.

75. ***practice.*** Cf. note on i. 2. 198.

77. ***If they not thought***: a common construction in E. E. The auxiliary was not required when the negative preceded the verb. See Abbott, § 305, and cf. iv. 2. 2.

79. ***fasten'd,*** determined.

80. ***got, i.e.*** begot. Cf. iii. 4. 151.

87. ***capable,*** legally able to inherit. The *New English Dictionary* gives the following quotation from Guillim's *Heraldry* (1610), "Bastards are not capable of their fathers patrimony."

99. *consort*, company, set; accented on the last syllable.

101. *put on*, incited to.

102. *expense*, the spending, expenditure.

103. Regan takes her cue from Goneril. She is perhaps even more repulsive than her sister, for she is cringingly spiteful, and lacks courage as well as initiative. "Regan is not, in fact, a greater monster than Goneril, but she has the power of casting more venom" (Coleridge).

108. *'Twas my duty*: the crowning touch of Edmund's sublime hypocrisy.

109. *bewray*, reveal, with no sense of perfidy, as now. Cf. iii. 6. 118.

his practice, Edgar's plot.

113. *make your own purpose . . .*, carry out your own design, availing yourself as you please of my power.

115. *virtue and obedience doth*. A singular verb is common in E. E. after two nouns which enforce the same idea or are not meant to be thought of separately. Cf. iii. 4. 150 and 158.

121–130. Regan interposes to explain on her own account the reason of their visit. It is not necessary to hold that Regan interrupts Cornwall, much less that the interruption is "characteristic." She could not behave to Cornwall in the overbearing manner that Goneril does to Albany. Cornwall's remark is complete in itself, and Regan merely takes it up and adds to it, as she is the person mainly concerned in their visit. It was to her that both her father and sister had written. Moreover, we are distinctly told in the following scene that it is the Duke's disposition "not to be rubb'd nor stopp'd." Cf. also ii. 4. 94–96.

121. *threading dark-eyed night*. Note the pun. There is another instance of it in *King John*, v. 4. 11, "Unthread the rude eye of rebellion."

122. *poise*, weight, moment.

125. *which*. The antecedent is some such word as "letters" understood. The relative is used with great freedom in E. E.

127. *attend dispatch*, await to be dispatched. Cf. ii. 4. 36.

SCENE 2

The events of this scene are not important in themselves, though they emphasize Regan's and Cornwall's hostility to Lear. They are essentially preparatory to the fourth scene of this act.

1. ***dawning***, morning.

9. ***Lipsbury pinfold***. This phrase remains unexplained. The suggestion received with most favor is that " It may be a coined name, and it is just possible that it might mean the teeth, as being the pinfold within the *lips* "(Nares); cf. ἕρκος ὀδόντων. This explanation, however, is not entirely satisfactory. There is probably an allusion to some place of which record has been lost.

16–17. ***three-suited***. . . . Some of Kent's allusions are explained by a passage in Ben Jonson's *Silent Woman*, iii. 1, in which a rich wife rails at her husband in the following terms: " Who gives you your maintenance, I pray you? Who allows you your horse-meat, and man's meat? your three suits of apparel a year? your four pair of stockings, one silk, three worsted? " Cf. also Middleton's *Phœnix*, iv. 3 (quoted by Steevens): " How's this? Am I used like a hundred-pound gentleman? " ***Three-suited***, menials being generally allowed three suits a year; ***hundred-pound***, a term of reproach implying poverty; ***worsted-stocking***, likewise implying poverty or menial employment, silk stockings being invariably worn by people who could afford them.

18. ***lily-livered***. Cf. iv. 2. 50, " Milk-livered man." The liver being regarded as the seat of courage, a bloodless liver was said to betoken cowardice. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, iv. 3. 113: " left the liver white and pale, which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice."

action-taking, settling disputes by law rather than by the sword; hence likewise " cowardly," " mean-spirited."

19. ***glass-gazing***, looking in the mirror, foppish.

superserviceable, above his work (Wright). Johnson and Schmidt give " over-officious."

20. ***one-trunk-inheriting***, possessing enough for one trunk only. For *inheriting*, see Glossary.

26. ***addition***. See note on i. 1. 138.

34–35. ***sop o' the moonshine***: perhaps an allusion to an old dish of eggs cooked in oil, called " eggs in moonshine," referred to in Gabriel Harvey's *Pierce's Supererogation* (1593) and other contemporary works.

35. ***cullionly***, rascally, wretched, like a cullion.

35–36. ***barber-monger***, a frequenter of barbers' shops, a fop.

39. ***vanity the puppet***. " Vanity " was a common character in the old *Moralities*.

41. *carbonado*, slash, hack; literally, make into a carbonado, *i.e.* a piece of flesh cut crosswise and grilled.

42. *come your ways*, come on.

45. *neat*, foppish, spruce.

48. *With you*. Kent purposely takes Edmund's "matter" in the sense of "cause of quarrel."

goodman, a familiar name of address, used contemptuously.

49. *flesh*, initiate in bloodshed; primarily, to initiate in the taste of flesh, as hunting-dogs.

59. *disclaims in*, disowns.

69–70. *zed! thou unnecessary letter*. Cf. Ben Jonson's *English Grammar* (ed. Gifford and Cunningham, iii, p. 435): "*Z* is a letter often heard amongst us, but seldom seen," its place being commonly taken in writing by *S*. The letter *Z* was often omitted in the dictionaries of the time.

71. *unbolted*, *i.e.* unsifted; hence, coarse. "Unbolted mortar is mortar made of unsifted lime, and to break the lumps it is necessary to tread it by men in wooden shoes" (Tollet).

81. *intrinse*, intricate.

84. *turn their halcyon beaks . . .* An allusion to the old idea that the kingfisher, if hung up by the neck, always turned so as to face straight against the wind.

87. *epileptic*, distorted with a grin.

88. *Smile*, smile at. See note on i. 1. 163.

89–90. *Goose . . . Camelot*. Large flocks of geese were bred on Sarum Plain near Cadbury, in Somersetshire, the traditional site of Camelot; and defeated knights were required to report at King Arthur's Court there; but the connection between these allusions is obscure.

98. The keynote of Kent's character, and the source of all his troubles. Cf. ii. 4. 42.

101. *some*, with the force of the indefinite article, a survival of the O. E. *sum*.

103. *constrains the garb Quite from his nature*, carries the assumed manner to a wholly unnatural extent.

107. *These kind of knaves*. See Kellner, §§ 167–172.

109. *observants*, obsequious courtiers. Similarly *observance* = homage (*As You Like It*, v. 2. 102), and *observe* = to show respect to, as in "the observed of all observers" (*Hamlet*, iii. 1. 162). Note that *observants* is accented on the first syllable.

110. *nicely*, punctiliously. See Glossary.

112. *aspect*, accented on the second syllable, as always in Shakespeare. Both *aspect* and *influence* have an astrological reference.

120. *win your displeasure*, etc., *i.e.* win you in your displeasure to ask me to be a plain knave (*i.e.* a flatterer).

124. *upon his misconstruction*, through his misunderstanding me.

125. *conjunct*, in agreement with him. Cf. v. 1. 12.

128. *worthied him*, made him appear worthy.

129. *For him attempting who was self-subdued*, for attacking one who had not really been subdued by him, but who had fallen.

130. *in the fleshment of*, being fleshed with, made eager. Cf. note on l. 50.

133. *Ajax is their fool*: either, Ajax is a fool compared with them, *i.e.* is outdone by them in bragging; or, a man like the plain, blunt Ajax is the kind of man these rogues and cowards always try to make a fool of.

145. *colour*, sort, kind.

148–152. *His fault . . . punish'd with.* Omitted in the Ff, which read for l. 152, " The king his master needs must take it ill."

161. *rubb'd*, hindered, obstructed; a term in the game of bowls, the noun *rub* signifying anything that hinders a bowl's course. Cf. *King John*, iii. 4. 128:

> " For even the breath of what I mean to speak
> Shall blow each dust, each straw, each little rub,
> Out of the path."

162. *watched*, kept awake. Cf. " o'er-watch'd," l. 177.

164. *out at heels.* Cf. " out at elbows."

167. *approve*, confirm, prove the truth of. Cf. i. 1. 186.

168–169. *out of heaven's . . . sun*, a proverbial expression for a change from better to worse. The earliest known instance of it occurs in the *Proverbs of John Heywood*, 1546 (ed. Sharman, 1874, p. 115):

> " In your running from him to me, yee runne
> Out of God's blessing into the warme sunne."

Cf. also Lyly's *Euphues* (ed. Arber, pp. 196 and 320). But the origin of this " common saw " is not known. Hanmer said

it was applied to those who are turned out of house and home to the open weather, and Johnson suggested that it was used of men dismissed from a hospital or house of charity. A recent explanation — that " the proverb refers to the haste of the congregation to leave the shelter of the church immediately after the priest's benediction, running from God's blessing into the warm sun " — need not be treated seriously. For the idea of the proverb, cf. *Psalms*, lii. 8.

175–177. Many explanations of this difficult sentence have been suggested. Some hold that the lines are a portion of Cordelia's letter read aloud by Kent. Others correct the syntax, reading " she'll " for " shall "; and taking " state-seeking " as a compound word. Others, again, accept the incompleteness of the sentence and ascribe it to Kent's being " weary and o'erwatched," the halting syntax indicating that Kent is dropping off to sleep. The text is apparently corrupt, and some words or lines may have been omitted.

SCENE 3

" Edgar's assumed madness serves the great purpose of taking off part of the shock which would otherwise be caused by the true madness of Lear " (Coleridge).

Bedlam beggars or *Tom o' Bedlams* (i. 2. 148), also known as *Abraham-men*, were convalescent or harmless patients of Bedlam asylum who were turned out to wander or beg. The custom was in vogue in Shakespeare's time, but appears to have ceased about the middle of the seventeenth century. (See note, iii. 6. 78–79.) The following account of an Abraham-man, quoted by Steevens from Dekker's *Bell-man of London*, 1608, is an interesting parallel to Shakespeare's description of Edgar: " He sweares he hath been in Bedlam, and will talke frantickely of purpose: you see pinnes stuck in sundry places of his naked flesh, especially in his armes, which paine he gladly puts himself to, only to make you believe he is out of his wits. He calls himselfe by the name of *Poore Tom*, and comming near any body cries out, *Poor Tom is a-cold*. Of these Abraham-men, some be exceeding merry, and doe nothing but sing songs fashioned out of their own braines: some will dance, others will doe nothing but either laugh or weepe; others are dogged and so sullen both in loke and speech, that spying but a small company in a house, they boldly and bluntly enter, compelling the servants through fear to give them what they demand."

1, 3. ***proclaim'd, port.*** Cf. ii. 1. 62 and 82.

6. ***am bethought,*** am minded, intend.

10. ***elf,*** mat, tangle, — as an elf might do.

17. ***object,*** appearance.

20. ***Turlygod,*** apparently a common name for a Bedlam beggar; perhaps an English variation of *Turlupin*, the name of a similar class of beggars in France in the fourteenth century.

SCENE 4

This great scene brings us to the crisis of Lear's anguish.

Finding Regan and Cornwall unexpectedly absent from their own home, Lear has followed them to Gloucester's castle.

7. ***cruel,*** with a play upon *crewel*, worsted; apparently a common pun at the time.

11. ***nether-stocks,*** literally stockings; another pun. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 130, " I'll sew nether stocks and mend them and foot them too." Breeches appear to have been called " over-stocks " or " upper-stocks."

24. ***upon respect,*** deliberately, upon consideration.

25. ***Resolve,*** inform, satisfy. Cf. *resolution*, i. 2. 108.

28. ***commend,*** deliver. See Glossary.

33. ***spite of intermission,*** though my business was thus interrupted.

34. ***on,*** in accordance with, on the ground of; this sense, which is very common in Shakespeare, arises from the temporal sense " immediately after." Cf. iii. 7. 77.

42. Admirable as is Kent's character in point of honesty and manliness, he is an unfortunate messenger for Lear to have chosen. He has Lear's hastiness and want of tact in an exaggerated degree, and he only prejudices his master's cause. In a sense all Lear's friends are his enemies, as they play into Goneril's and Regan's hands.

46–53. ***Winter's . . . year.*** Omitted in the Qq.

52. ***dolours:*** another pun, suggested by (money) " bags " in l. 50. The same pun occurs in *The Tempest*, ii. 1. 18–19 and *Measure for Measure*, i. 2. 50.

54, 55. ***mother*** and ***Hysterica passio*** were the popular and medical names for the complaint now known as hysteria. The use of these terms was probably suggested by a passage in Harsnet's *Declaration of Popish Impostures*, 1603, to which Shakespeare is otherwise indebted in this play. Lear's anguish

of heart makes him ascribe to himself the complaint which, according to Harsnet, " riseth of a winde in the bottome of the belly, and proceeding with a great swelling, causeth a very painful collicke in the stomach, and an extraordinary giddiness in the head " (quoted by Bishop Percy). Hence Lear's words, " climbing sorrow " and " swells up towards my heart."

63. ***How chance*** was a common construction in questions for " how chances it that." " Here chance takes no inflection and almost assumes the character of an adverb " (*New Eng. Dict.*). Cf. *Merry Wives*, v. 5. 230, " How chance you went not with Master Slender? "

68–69. ***school to an ant . . . winter.*** See *Proverbs*, vi. 6–8. A king's followers are only summer friends; Lear has " so small a train " because he is in adversity.

72. ***stinking***, referring likewise to Lear's adversity. Malone quotes in illustration *All's Well*, v. 2. 4, etc.: " I am now, sir, muddied in fortune's mood, and smell somewhat strong of her strong displeasure. . . . Truly fortune's displeasure is but sluttish, if it smell so strongly as thou speakest of."

79. ***sir***, man; frequently so used as a common noun in Shakespeare.

85–86. After referring to the wise man flying, the Fool adds that the wise man who is such a knave as to run away is in reality a fool, while on the other hand the fool who remains is no knave. The antecedent to *that* is *knave.*

89. ***Deny***, refuse.

90. ***fetches***, subterfuges, tricks. Note the play on the word in l. 92.

106–110. Lear's generous attempt to excuse Cornwall suggests that he is mellowing with his misfortunes. The " fiery quality " that he complains of is one of his own strongest characteristics, and he himself was " unremovable and fixed " when he disinherited Cordelia and banished Kent. His misfortunes have so far dazed him that he almost seems to be learning self-control. But the sight of Kent, and the thought of the indignity thus done him in his messenger, throw him back on his old impetuosity.

107. ***office***, duty.

111. ***more headier.*** For the double comparative, see note on i. 1. 80. The comparative has here merely an intensive force, " more headier " meaning " very heady," " too heady." Cf. *Cymbeline*, iii. 4. 164, " the harder heart." Heady = impetuous.

112. *To take*, for taking. This gerundial infinitive is common in E. E.

115. *remotion*, removal.

120. *cry sleep to death*, put an end to sleep.

123. *cockney*, a pampered, affected woman. The context suggests that the word is used also in the sense of "cook"; but there is no evidence to show that it had ever any such meaning. See Glossary.

137. An allusion to the story of Prometheus, who was chained to a rock on Mount Caucasus, where a vulture fed on his liver.

141–142. The literal meaning is the opposite of what is intended. The sense, however, is clear, — You rather fail to value, are more likely to undervalue.

142–147. *Say, how . . . blame.* Omitted in the Qq.

157. *unnecessary*, of no account, useless.

165. *top*, head.

young bones, a fairly common phrase in Elizabethan literature for an "unborn child."

166. *taking*, malignant, infecting, blasting; "used of the malignant influence of superhuman powers" (Schmidt). Cf. iii. 4. 61, and *Hamlet*, i. 1. 163:

> "then no planets strike,
> No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm."

174. *tender-hefted*, tenderly fitted, delicately framed. *Heft* is an old form for *haft*, a handle.

181. *bond of childhood*. Lear himself is now constrained to refer to the "bond of childhood." Cf. Cordelia's words, i. 1. 95.

182. *Effects*, manifestations. Cf. i. 1. 133.

184. So far Regan has said nothing to incense Lear. She has been cold and heartless, but she wants the courage to show herself in her true light before the arrival of her sister. Once she has Goneril's presence to support her, she can screw herself up to actions which are a maddening sequel to the praises Lear has just uttered.

186. *approves*. See note on ii. 2. 167.

194. *Allow*, approve of.

"When Lear calls upon the heavens to avenge his cause, 'for they are old like him,' there is nothing extravagant or impious in this sublime identification of his age with theirs; for

there is no other image which could do justice to the agonising sense of his wrongs and his despair" (Hazlitt).

203. ***much less advancement***, a much less respectable punishment.

219. ***sumpter***, literally a packhorse; used in the secondary sense of "drudge."

248. ***slack***, neglect, be careless in their attendance on.

259–261. *I.e.* Goneril, wicked as she is, appears well favored in comparison with Regan; it is something to be said for Goneril that there is another even more wicked.

267. "Observe that the tranquillity which follows the first stunning of the blow permits Lear to reason" (Coleridge).

268. ***superfluous***, possessed of more than what is necessary.

289. The disjointed syntax, the short words, and their directness show Lear's difficulty in expressing himself. In this awful picture of passion the very structure of the lines reflects the incoherence of Lear's rage. He begins by asking Heaven for patience, but in the next breath asks to be touched with noble anger, and, struggling against his gentler impulses, defiantly threatens the "terrors of the earth."

295. ***For his particular***, as to him himself. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 2. 9, "As far as toucheth my particular," *i.e.* as far as I myself am concerned.

308. ***a desperate train.*** Not a fair description of Lear's present attendants, Kent and the Fool. But see iii. 7. 16–17.

309. ***incense***, incite, provoke.

ACT III — SCENE 1

So far, everything has gone well with Regan and Goneril. In this scene we have the first hint of their retribution, in the announcement that the King of France has planned an invasion. But though the tide is turning against Regan and Goneril, Lear's lot becomes only more pitiable. The agitation and tempest in his own mind are symbolized in the raging of the elements.

6. ***main***, apparently in the uncommon sense of *mainland*, though other instances of this use have been pointed out in E. E., but not in Shakespeare.

7–15. ***tears . . . take all.*** Omitted in the Ff.

10. ***little world of man.*** An allusion to the old theory according to which man — the "microcosm" or little world —

was an epitome of the universe or great world — the " macrocosm." This theory was the basis of the astrological belief, so often alluded to in this play, in the connection of the movements of the planets with the fortunes of men.

12. *cub-drawn*, *i.e.* " with udders all drawn dry," " sucked and hungry," as in *As You Like It*, iv. 2. 115, 127.

18. *upon the warrant of my note*, on the strength of my information.

19. *dear*, important, momentous; cf. i. 4. 294.

22–29. *who have . . . furnishings*. Omitted in the Qq.

23–24. *who, Which*. See Abbott, § 266.

24. *speculations*, observers; an instance of abstract for concrete. Cf. iii. 4. 26.

25. *Intelligent*, informative, giving information. Cf. iii. 7. 12.

26. *snuffs*, resentments, quarrels. " To take in snuff " was a regular phrase (used elsewhere in Shakespeare) for " to take offence at."

packings, plottings. Cf. *packs* (confederacies), v. 3. 18, and the use of the verb (= to arrange or manipulate fraudulently), as in the phrases " to pack a jury," " to pack cards."

29. *furnishings*, outward signs.

30–42. *But, true . . . to you*. Omitted in the Ff.

43. *I will talk further with you*. An attempt to postpone or evade the matter. But Kent refuses to be put off.

47. *fear*, doubt. Cf. v. 1. 16.

53–54. *in which your pain That way, I'll this*, *i.e.* your work of search lies that way, while I'll go this.

SCENE 2

2. *hurricanoes*, waterspouts.

3. *cocks*, weathercocks.

4. *thought-executing*, doing execution with the speed of thought.

8. *germens*, seeds of life.

10. *court holy-water*, a proverbial phrase for flattery, fair words, " soft sawder." Cf. the French *eau bénite de cour*.

13. *here's a night pities*. This construction is frequently explained as due to the omission of the relative (see Abbott, § 244); but it is really a survival of the construction called ἀπὸ κοινοῦ, in which one subject serves for two predicates, and

from which the relative clause was developed. See Kellner, §§ 109–111. Cf. i. 4. 64–65, iii. 4. 110–111, and iv. 3. 34–35.

18. ***subscription***, submission. Cf. *subscribed*, i. 2. 24.

23. ***battles***, battalions, as commonly in E. E.

27–34. It is difficult to draw a satisfactory meaning from these verses, though the Fool's remarks have generally a deep significance. The best explanation is by that Furness: "A man who prefers or cherishes a mean member in place of a vital one shall suffer enduring pain where others would suffer merely a twinge. Lear had preferred Regan and Goneril to Cordelia."

48–49. It is too great for man to suffer or to dread.

54. ***simular man***, *i.e.* a simulator. This is the reading of the Ff; the Qq omit *man*, which makes *simular* a noun.

57. ***practised***. See note on i. 2. 198.

58. ***concealing continents***, shrouds of secrecy. For this use of *continent* in the sense of "that which contains," cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 14. 40, "Heart, once be stronger than thy continent."

58–59. ***cry These dreadful summoners grace***. A common construction. Cf. "cry you mercy," iii. 4. 176 and iii. 6. 54. ***grace***, mercy.

60. ***More sinn'd against than sinning***. Cf. the similar statement of Œdipus in the *Œdipus Coloneus* of Sophocles, ll. 266–267:

ἐπεὶ τά γ' ἔργα μου
πεπονθότ' ἐστὶ μᾶλλον ἢ δεδρακότα.

("Since mine acts, at least, have been in suffering rather than in doing.")

66. ***Denied***, did not allow. Cf. note on ii. 4. 89.

67. ***My wits begin to turn***. Note the succession of Lear's statements as to his mental condition and their increasing definiteness. In i. 4. 248–249 he says:

> "Either his notion weakens, his discernings
> Are lethargied — Ha! waking? 'tis not so";

in i. 5. 50–51:

> "O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!
> Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!";

in ii. 4. 221:

> "I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad";

in ii. 4. 289:

" O fool, I shall go mad ! "

Now he says definitely, " My wits begin to turn."

74–77. Apparently a variation of the first verse of the Clown's song at the end of *Twelfth Night:*

" When that I was and a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day."

80–95. Omitted in the Qq, and probably an actor's interpolation. The verses are modelled on some well-known lines commonly called " Chaucer's Prophecy." They are referred to as by Chaucer in Puttenham's *Art of English Poesie* (ed. Arber, p. 232), but are certainly not his. See Skeat's *Chaucer*, vol. i, p. 46, where they are reprinted from Caxton. There is in the Bodleian (see Professor Skeat's letter to the *Athenæum*, December 19, 1896) a MS. copy of this very prophecy with the heading " Prophecia Merlini doctoris perfecti." In *1 Henry IV*, iii. 1. 150, Shakespeare speaks of " the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies." Some of Merlin's prophecies are given in Holinshed.

SCENE 3

The Gloucester plot is again taken up and interwoven more closely with the main story. Hitherto Gloucester has only hinted disapproval of Goneril's and Regan's conduct (ii. 4. 303), but now he definitely throws in his lot with Lear. He confides in Edmund, and so plays into the hands of his enemies. The parallelisms in the two stories become more marked.

13. ***home***, to the utmost, thoroughly. Cf. iii. 4. 16.

power already footed. See iii. 1. 30–32.

20. ***toward***, near at hand. Cf. ii. 1. 12.

22. ***forbid thee***, which you were forbidden to do him.

SCENE 4

" O, what a world's convention of agonies is here ! All external nature in a storm, all moral nature convulsed, — the real madness of Lear, the feigned madness of Edgar, the babbling of the Fool, the desperate fidelity of Kent — surely

such a scene was never conceived before or since! Take it but as a picture for the eye only, it is more terrific than any which a Michael Angelo, inspired by a Dante, could have conceived, and which none but a Michael Angelo could have executed. Or let it have been uttered to the blind, the howlings of nature would seem converted into the voice of conscious humanity. This scene ends with the first symptoms of positive derangement; and the intervention of the fifth scene is particularly judicious, — the interruption allowing an interval for Lear to appear in full madness in the sixth scene" (Coleridge).

28–36. Lear's affliction incites compassion in him for the poorest of his subjects. The finer elements in his character are brought out by his sufferings. "Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel" is utterly alien to the Lear of the first scene. Compare Gloucester's similar remark after he too has suffered (iv. 1. 70–72).

31. ***loop'd,*** full of holes, loop-holed. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, iv. 1. 71:

> "Stop all sight-holes, every loop from whence
> The eye of reason may pry in upon us."

37. ***Fathom and half,*** as if he were taking soundings at sea, the idea being suggested apparently by the rain.

47. ***Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.*** Probably a line from an old song or ballad. Cf. Percy's *Friar of Orders Grey*, l. 87.

48. ***go to thy cold bed and warm thee.*** This phrase occurs also in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, l. 10. It was apparently proverbial.

54–55. ***laid knives . . . pew.*** This passage likewise (cf. ii. 4. 54–55) seems to owe something to Harsnet's *Declaration of Popish Impostures*, 1603. Malone quotes from it a story of how an apothecary, in order to tempt a girl to suicide, "having brought with him . . . a new halter, and two blades of knives, did leave the same upon the gallerie floore in her maister's house"; and how "it was reported that the devil layd them in the gallery that some of those that were possessed might either hang themselves with the halter or kill themselves with the blades."

58. ***four-inched,*** four inches broad.

59. ***five wits,*** not the *five senses*, but "common wit, imagination, fantasy, estimation, and memory," according to a line

in Stephen Hawes's *Pastime of Pleasure* (quoted by Malone). The two terms are often confounded, but Shakespeare keeps them distinct. Thus *Sonnets*, cxli:

> " But my five wits nor my five senses can
> Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee."

Cf. iii. 6. 60 and *Twelfth Night*, iv. 2. 92.

61. ***star-blasting***, being " struck " or blighted by the influence of the stars.

taking. See note on ii. 4. 166.

72. " What a bewildered amazement, what a wrench of the imagination, that cannot be brought to conceive of any other cause of misery than that which has bowed it down, and absorbs all other sorrow in its own! His sorrow, like a flood, supplies the sources of all other sorrow." And again, " It is the mere natural ebullition of passion, urged nearly to madness, and that will admit no other cause of dire misfortune but its own, which swallows up all other griefs " (Hazlitt).

77. ***pelican daughters***. An allusion to the legend that young pelicans fed upon their parents' blood. The story occurs in the mediæval Bestiaries, among others in the *Ancren Riwle*. Cf. *Hamlet*, iv. 5. 146, and *Richard II*, ii. 1. 126. A similar allusion occurs in the old play of *King Leir:*

> " I am as kind as is the pelican
> That kills it selfe to save her yong ones lives."

78. ***Pillicock*** — here suggested by " pelican " — was a term of endearment meaning " my pretty boy." There is perhaps an allusion to the old rhyme:

> " Pillicock, Pillicock sat on a hill,
> If he's not gone, he sits there still."

(Quoted by Collier from *Gammer Gurton's Garland.*)

88. ***wore gloves in my cap***, as his mistress's favors.

103. ***Dolphin my boy***. Apparently another allusion to a song. The same phrase occurs in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, v. 3, " He shall be Dauphin my boy." Steevens adduced a stanza from which he said it was taken:

> " Dolphin, my boy, my boy,
> Cease, let him trot by;
> It seemeth not that such a foe
> From me or you would fly."

This was a stanza, he said, from a very old ballad written on some battle fought in France, and repeated to him by an old gentleman. Unfortunately, no trace of this ballad is discoverable. *Dolphin* is an old form of *Dauphin*.

sessa, on! an exhortation to speed. Cf. iii. 6. 77.

109. ***the cat***, *i.e.* the civet-cat.

116. ***naughty***, bad, disagreeable. See Glossary.

120. ***Flibbertigibbet***. The name of a fiend, probably suggested, like Smulkin, Modo, Mahu, and Frateretto (iii. 6. 7) below, by a passage in Harsnet's *Declaration of Popish Impostures*. The word, however, was fairly common at the time, though in different forms, *e.g.* "flebergebet," and it was used in the sense of a gossiping or frivolous woman. Cf. Scott's *Kenilworth*, ch. x.

122. ***the web and the pin***, an old name for cataract. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, i. 2. 291:

> "and all eyes
> Blind with the web and pin but theirs."

125. ***S. Withold***, Saint Vitalis, who was invoked against nightmare. The Ff have Swithold, a reading preserved by several editors.

old, *i.e.* wold, a down. *Old* is a common provincial pronunciation; the form is often found in E. E.

126. ***nine-fold***, "nine familiars, in the form of 'foals'" (Herford).

129. ***aroint thee***, begone, away with thee. The origin of the word is unknown. Cf. *Macbeth*, i. 3. 6.

136. ***wall-newt***, the lizard.

water, water-newt.

138. ***sallets***, salads; a common form in E. E.

139. ***ditch-dog***, a dead dog thrown into a ditch.

144–145. A quotation from the romance of *Sir Bevis of Hamptoun:*

> "Rattes and myce and suche small dere
> Was his meate that seven yere."

deer. See Glossary.

164. ***prevent***, with the old sense of anticipating, and so defeating by forestalling.

169. ***He said***. See i. 1. 157–159.

172. ***outlaw'd from my blood***. One of the legal conse-

quences of outlawry is " corruption of blood," *i.e.* inability to inherit or bequeath. Cf. *1 Henry VI*, iii. 1. 159:

" Our pleasure is
That Richard be restored to his blood."

In Gloucester's words " he sought my life," Edgar has the first explanation of his father's attitude.

176. *O, cry you mercy*, I beg your pardon; a common phrase in the Elizabethan dramatists. Cf. iii. 2. 58.

182. *soothe*, humor, as frequently in Shakespeare.

187. *Child Rowland . . .* These lines may perhaps be taken from the ballad of " Child Rowland and Burd Ellen," fragments of which are given in Child's *English and Scottish Ballads*, 1861, vol. i. Two of the lines (p. 251) are:

" With *fi, fi, fo,* and *fum*
I smell the blood of a Christian man."

For *British*, see Introduction, p. ix.

SCENE 5

Edmund now appears at the height of his villainy and of his fortune. He has already supplanted his elder brother in his father's regard and has been declared heir; he now supplants his father himself and is made, by Cornwall, Earl of Gloucester.

3. *censured*, judged (not necessarily judged adversely). This is the usual meaning in Shakespeare. Cf. the similar tendency in the word *criticism*.

4–5. *something fears me*, frightens me somewhat.

8. *provoking merit, set-a-work . . .*, a strenuous merit (in Edgar) incited by a reprehensible badness in Gloucester.

12. *approves him*, proves him to be. Cf. note on i. 1. 187.

intelligent, well-informed, though it may have the same force as in iii. 1. 25 and iii. 7. 12.

18. Edmund's plans have succeeded. Cf. iii. 2. 24–25.

21. *comforting*, assisting. See Glossary.

SCENE 6

4. *have*, plural by attraction.

7. *Frateretto.* See note on iii. 4. 120.

7–8. *Nero . . . darkness.* Said to be an allusion to Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, ii. 30, where Nero is described as

a fiddler and Trajan as an angler. There is another reference to Rabelais in *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 238, " You must borrow me Gargantua's mouth."

8. ***innocent***, a mild term for simpleton, fool.

13–15. ***No, he's a yeoman . . . him.*** Omitted in the Qq. It has been surmised that in writing this passage Shakespeare was humorously thinking of his own experience. In 1599 his family had been granted a coat of arms by the College of Heralds. Probably it was Shakespeare himself who suggested to his father that these insignia of the gentleman be applied for. His father however, does not fall into the Fool's category of " mad yeoman "; for the application was in John Shakespeare's name, and consequently William was not made " a gentleman before him."

18–59. ***The foul fiend . . . let her 'scape?*** Omitted in the Ff.

20. ***horse's health***, the horse being specially liable to disease. Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, iii. 2. 50–56.

25–26. ***Wantest thou eyes. . . .*** This is a doubtful passage, possibly corrupt. It may mean " Dost thou want to be stared at by the fiend while thou art on trial," or " Canst thou not see the fiend at thy trial? "

27. ***Come o'er the bourn, Bessy.*** The first line of a ballad by William Birche, written in 1558, the year of the queen's accession, and entitled *A Songe betwene the Quenes Majestie and Englande.* It is printed in full in the *Harleian Miscellany*, vol. x, p. 260, edition of 1813. The first lines are:

> " Come over the born, Bessy,
> Come over the born, Bessy,
> Swete Bessey come over to me."

bourn, brook; a variant of *burn*.

32. ***Hopdance*** : probably suggested by " Hoberdidance," the name of another fiend in Harsnet's *Declaration*. *Hobbididance* (iv. 1. 62) apparently is another form of the same word.

33. ***white herring***, fresh herring.

40. ***Bench***, sit on the judge's bench.

43–46. ***Sleepest or wakest thou . . .?*** Apparently another snatch of a song.

45. ***minikin***, dainty, pretty.

47. ***Pur!*** Perhaps only an imitation of the noise made by a cat, though, as Malone pointed out, *Purre* is the name of one of the devils mentioned in Harsnet's book.

54–55. *I took you for a joint-stool*, a proverbial expression, of which the precise meaning is not now known.

57. *store.* Some editions read " stone," others " stuff."

60. *five wits.* See note on iii. 4. 59.

61–62. See ii. 4. 233 and 274, and iii. 2. 37.

65. " When he exclaims in the mad scene ' The little dogs ' etc., it is passion lending occasion to imagination to make every creature in league against him, conjuring up ingratitude and insult in their least-looked-for and most galling shapes, searching every thread and fibre of his heart, and finding out the last remaining image of respect or attachment in the bottom of his breast only to torture and kill it ! " And again, " All nature was, as he supposed, in a conspiracy against him, and the most trivial and insignificant creatures concerned in it were the most striking proofs of its malignity and extent " (Hazlitt).

72. *brach*: cf. note on i. 4. 125.

lym, a bloodhound; called also a *lyam* or *lime-hound*, " from the *leam* or leash in which he was held till he was let slip."

73. *trundle-tail*, a dog with a curled tail.

78–79. *thy horn is dry.* The allusion is explained by the following passage in Aubrey's *Natural History of Wiltshire* (quoted by Halliwell-Phillipps): " Till the breaking out of the Civill Warres, *Tom o' Bedlams* did trauell about the countery. They had been poore distracted men that had been putt into Bedlam, where recovering to some sobernesse, they were licentiated to goe a begging. . . . They wore about their necks a great horn of an oxe in a string or bawdric, which, when they came to an house for almes, they did wind; and they did putt the drink given them into this horn, whereto they did putt a stopple." Edgar's meaning, of course, is that he has come to the end of his rôle.

85. *Persian*, *i.e.* rich and gorgeous; spoken ironically. Cf. Horace's " Persicos apparatus," *Odes*, i. 38.

92. *I'll go to bed at noon.* The Fool's last speech, by some critics supposed to mean that he feels a premonition of death.

102. *Stand in assured loss*, will assuredly be lost. Cf. l. 107, *stand in hard cure*, will be hard to cure, is almost incurable; ii. 4. 261, iv. 1. 4, etc. In this common idiom *stand* is an emphatic substitute for the auxiliary.

104–108. *Oppressed . . . behind.* Omitted in the Ff.

105. *sinews*: used in the sense of nerves. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 903, " A second fear through all her sinews spread."

109–122. ***When we . . . lurk.*** This soliloquy is not in the Ff. Its genuineness has been doubted on the score of its style. In point of its rhythm and verse mechanism generally, it is inferior to the other rhymed passages in this play. But, on the other hand, it has much closer connection with the action of the play than an interpolation would be likely to have, and certain parts, *e.g.* " he childed as I father'd," are undoubtedly in the Shakespearean manner. The inferiority of the opening lines prejudices us against the passage, but there is nothing to disprove its genuineness.

117. ***He childed as I father'd,*** even as he had cruel children, so I had a cruel father.

118. ***bewray.*** Cf. ii. 1. 109, " Show thyself when false opinion, which now does thee wrong, thinks of thee justly and recalls thee to reconciliation."

121. ***What will hap more,*** whatever else happens.

SCENE 7

The Gloucester plot again supplements the main story. The villainy of Edmund is at last unmasked, but not until Gloucester, like Lear, has suffered by filial treachery. His mutilation on the stage has been the subject of much criticism. Johnson considered it " an act too horrid to be endured in dramatic exhibition "; and Coleridge declared that " in this one point the tragic in this play has been urged beyond the outermost mark and *ne plus ultra* of the dramatic." There is no denying the repulsiveness of the blinding of Gloucester. It is no extenuation that there are other instances, as several editors point out, of mutilation on the Elizabethan stage. Yet it may be urged that a bold and direct treatment of this second case of barbarity was necessary after the terrible scene on the heath, as a bare narration of it would not, under the circumstances, have conveyed an adequate impression.

11. ***bound,*** ready, prepared; as perhaps also in l. 8.

13. ***my lord of Gloucester,*** Edmund's new title (see iii. 5. 18–19); purposely contrasted with Oswald's use of the title.

17. ***questrists,*** searchers; not found again in Shakespeare.

18. ***lords dependants.*** Some editors read *lord's dependants, i.e.* Gloucester's dependants. The reading in the text means lords dependent directly upon Lear.

24. ***pass upon***, pass sentence upon. Cf. *Measure for Measure*, ii. 1. 19, " The jury, passing on the prisoner's life."

29. ***corky***, shrivelled, withered with age.

39. ***quicken***, come to life.

40. ***favours***, features: " the features of your host." See Glossary.

32. ***simple***, straightforward. This is the reading of the Qq; the Ff read *simple-answer'd*.

47. ***set down***, written.

54. ***I am tied to the stake***. Cf. *Macbeth*, v. 7. 1–2:

> " They have tied me to a stake: I cannot fly,
> But, bear-like, I must fight the course."

The *course* is a technical term in bear-baiting for each attack of the dogs; cf. " round " in boxing, " bout," etc.

56–66. Gloucester is turned to bay.

57. ***Pluck out his . . . eyes***. One of the most striking of the many instances of dramatic irony in the play. Gloucester unwittingly mentions his own fate.

63. ***stern***. The Qq have *dearn*, — an obsolete word meaning dark, drear, dire, — which occurs also in *Pericles*, iii. 15.

65. ***All cruels else subscribed*** (the Quarto reading), probably " all their other cruelties being forgiven." *Cruels* is an instance of the Elizabethan use of an adjective as a noun; see Kellner, § 236. *Subscribed*, yielded, hence condoned, forgiven; cf. i. 2. 24. The Ff read: *All cruels else subscribe*, probably meaning " All other cruel creatures, except you, forgive."

87–90. The climax of Gloucester's agony and of Regan's brutality.

89. ***overture***, disclosure.

92. ***prosper***. Cf. the transitive use in iv. 6. 30.

99–107. ***I'll never . . . help him***. Omitted in the Ff.

101. ***old***, usual, natural.

106. ***flax and white of eggs***, a common application at that time for wounds.

ACT IV — SCENE 1

This scene is a direct sequel to the closing passage of the previous act. The help that Edgar gives to his father, who is in a sense the cause of the sufferings of both, is an exact counterpart to Cordelia's solicitude for Lear.

1. ***known to be***, conscious of being.

6. ***laughter***, *i.e.* a happy or better condition.

6–9. ***Welcome . . . blasts.*** Omitted in the Qq.

22. ***Our means secure us***, etc. Our resources make us confident and careless, and our unalloyed defects prove our benefits. For this common E. E. sense of *secure*, cf. *Othello*, i. 3. 10, "I do not so secure me in the error," and for *commodities*, cf. *2 Henry IV*, i. 2. 278, "I will turn diseases to commodity."

24. ***abused***, deceived. Cf. iv. 7. 53, 77, and v. i. 11. This sense is retained in the negative *disabuse*.

54. ***daub it further***, keep up the disguise.

62. Obidicut, probably suggested by *Hoberdicut*, one of Harsnet's fiends.

Hobbididance. See note on iii. 6. 32.

64. ***mopping and mowing***, making grimaces; the two words are practically synonymous. Cf. *The Tempest*, iv. 1. 47, "Will be here with mop and mow." Malone quotes from Harsnet, "If she have a little helpe of the mother, epilepsie, or cramp, to teach her . . . make antike faces, grinne, mow and mop like an ape, then no doubt the young girle is owleblasted and possessed."

71. ***slaves***, treats as a slave, makes subservient to his desire. This passage is Gloucester's counterpart to Lear's utterance on pomp, iii. 4. 33–36.

SCENE 2

The clue to the dénouement is now given in the adulterous love of Goneril for Edmund, and in the conduct of Albany. When we last saw Albany (i. 4) he appeared in an unfavorable light as a passive witness of his wife's schemes, or at best only able to hint his disapproval; and in this scene Goneril begins by treating him as a "milk-livered man." But the monstrous conduct of Goneril at last awakens him to think for himself and to take up firmly a line of his own.

2. ***Not met us.*** Cf. l. 53 and ii. 1. 77.

12. ***cowish***, cowardly.

14–15. ***Our wishes***, etc. The wishes we expressed on the way hither may be realized.

28. ***My fool usurps my body.*** The reading of the Ff. There are three distinct readings of this phrase in the Qq. Q1, uncorrected, has "My foot usurps my body"; Q1, corrected,

has " A fool usurps my bed; " while Q2 reads " My foot usurps my head."

29. Goneril refers to Albany's indifference to her. This proverbial expression is given in the *Proverbs of John Heywood*, 1546, " It is . . . A poor dog that is not worth the whistling " (ed. Sharman, 1874, p. 76).

31–50. ***I fear . . . deep.*** Omitted in the Ff.

31. ***fear,*** fear for. Cf. *Richard III*, i. 1. 137, " his physicians fear him mightily."

32. ***it.*** See note on i. 4. 236.

33. ***border'd certain,*** contained with certainty.

34. ***sliver,*** break off, strip off. Cf. *Macbeth*, iv. 1. 28,

" slips of yew
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse."

39. ***savour,*** have a relish for.

42. ***head-lugg'd,*** drawn by the head.

50. ***Milk-liver'd.*** See note on ii. 2. 18.

53–59. ***that not knows't . . . doe she so.*** Omitted in the Ff.

54. ***villains.*** Probably an allusion to Lear; possibly to Albany, France, or Gloucester.

58. ***moral,*** moralizing. Cf. the use of *moral* as a verb in *As You Like It*, ii. 7. 29,

" I did hear
The motley fool thus moral on the time."

59–67. Albany's violent speeches are obscure. Some scholars believe that he speaks of Goneril inconsistently, — first as a woman who has taken on a fiendish shape (" bemonstering " her " feature "), and then as a fiend in woman's shape. Others believe that throughout he addresses her as a fiend who has " self-covered " himself in the inappropriate form of woman. The following notes are in harmony with the latter view.

60. ***Proper deformity seems not in the fiend,*** deformity seems not so horrid in a fiend, because proper to his immoral character, as it seems in a woman.

62–69. Omitted in the Ff.

63. ***Be-monster not thy feature,*** do not take on the outward form of a woman, unnatural to a devil.

Were't my fitness, were it fit for me, a man.

65. ***apt***, ready.

68. ***your manhood! mew!*** The uncorrected sheets of the Q1 and Q2 read *your manhood now*, — a reading adopted by some editors; the corrected sheets read *your manhood mew*, — explained as "suppress, restrain your manhood." The reading in the text, *your manhood! mew!* is that given in the second edition of the Cambridge Shakespeare (1891), in accordance with a suggestion in Mr. Daniel's introduction to the facsimile reprint of Q 1 (1885). Here *mew* is an interjection of disgust and contempt. There are many contemporary instances of it.

73. ***remorse***, pity, as generally in Shakespeare.

74. ***bending***, turning, directing; cf. ii. 1. 48.

79. ***nether***, earthly.

83. ***One way***, in so far as Cornwall has been got out of the road — an idea to which she reverts in ll. 86–87, "another way, the news is not so tart."

85. ***all the building in my fancy***, all my castles in the air. The fact that she is a widow and that Gloucester is with her may frustrate all my hopes and make life hateful to me.

91. ***back***, *i.e.* going back.

SCENE 3

This scene is omitted in the Ff. It is accordingly not essential to the development of the plot. But it stands in dramatic contrast to the previous scene, while the description of Cordelia's grief on learning what has happened is one of the most beautiful of the gentler passages in the play.

21. ***Were like, a better way***, were like sunshine and rain, but in a more beautiful manner. Several explanations and emendations of this difficult phrase have been given. Warburton reads "like a wetter May," and Malone, "like a better May;" but neither of these gives better sense than the original reading. Many editors omit the comma after "like."

33. ***clamour moisten'd***, *i.e.* tears succeeded her cries of indignation at her sisters. This is Capell's emendation of the Quarto reading, *And clamour moistened her.*

34–37. A recurrence to the astrological theories expressed earlier in the play by Gloucester.

36. ***self***, *i.e.* self-same. This adjectival use of "self," which is a survival from O. E., was still common in Shakespeare's time.

44. ***elbows***, jostles, torments; literally, "thrusts with the elbow."

46. ***foreign casualties***, hazards abroad.

53. ***dear***, important. See note on i. 4. 294 and on iii. 1. 19.

SCENE 4

This scene likewise does not further the action of the drama; but it reintroduces Cordelia, who has not appeared since the very first scene.

4. ***hor-docks***, the reading of the Qq; the Ff have *hardokes* and *hardocks*. The plant has not been identified. Many editions adopt the emendation *burdocks*.

cuckoo-flowers, a name given to several wild flowers which bloom when the cuckoo is heard; here probably the cowslip.

6. ***century***. Generally defined as "a troop of a hundred men," as in *Coriolanus*, i. 7. 3. But *century* was an old variant of *sentry* — the *New English Dictionary* cites an example of this form as late as 1759 — and this is perhaps the meaning of the word here.

10. ***helps***, cures; a common meaning in E. E. and later. Cf. Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*, l. 105:

> "But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that
> Honour feels."

15. ***anguish***: used commonly in E. E. of physical as well as of mental suffering. Cf. iv. 6. 6.

26. ***important***, importunate. Cf. *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 73–75, "if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in every thing."

SCENE 5

This scene likewise does not advance the plot; but it prepares us for the dénouement by showing the increasing jealousy of Goneril and Regan.

13. ***nighted***, benighted, darkened.

18. The fidelity of Oswald to Goneril is the only thing that at all relieves the utter baseness and blackness of his character.

25. ***œillades***, amorous glances. See Glossary.

29. ***take this note***, take note of this.

SCENE 6

This important scene is divided roughly into three parts. The first, which contains the famous description of Dover Cliff, is a direct continuation of the opening scene of this act; the second brings into comparison Lear and Gloucester in the height of their suffering; and the third, unlike the others, is devoted mainly to the unravelling of the plot.

10. ***better spoken.*** See note on i. 1. 275.

11–24. The following criticism of the description of Dover Cliff was made by Johnson: "The description is certainly not mean, but I am far from thinking it wrought to the utmost excellence of poetry. He that looks from a precipice finds himself assailed by one great and dreadful image of irresistible destruction. But this overwhelming idea is dissipated and enfeebled from the instant that the mind can restore itself to the observation of particulars, and diffuse its attention to distinct objects. The enumeration of the choughs and crows, the samphire-man, and the fishers counteracts the great effect of the prospect, as it peoples the desert of intermediate vacuity, and stops the mind in the rapidity of its descent through emptiness and horror." A similar opinion is recorded by Boswell in his *Life of Johnson.* "No, Sir; it should be all precipice — all vacuum. The crows impede your fall. The diminished appearance of the boats, and other circumstances, are all very good description, but do not impress the mind at once with the horrible idea of immense height. The impression is divided; you pass on, by computation, from one stage of the tremendous space to another."

This criticism amounts simply to a condemnation of the "romantic" method of description. The "classical" manner for which Johnson here pleads aims at a unity of impression by means of generalized statements. Avoiding the mention of particulars, so as not to give them undue importance or to take away from the general effect, it leaves these particulars to be filled in by the reader's imagination. The romantic manner, on the other hand, follows an opposite course, and trusts to particulars as a means of conveying the general impression. There can be no question which manner is the more vivid in its effect, and accordingly better suited for the drama. A generalized description could present only a vague image of altitude. It would never make us *feel* the giddy height.

15. ***samphire***, sea-fennel, an herb which grows on cliffs and

is used for pickling. The gathering of samphire was a regular trade in Shakespeare's time, and Dover Cliff appears to have been particularly famous for the herb. Cf. Drayton's *Polyolbion, the Eighteenth Song* (Spenser Society Publications, 1889, p. 300):

> " Rob Dovers neighboring cleeues of sampyre, to excite
> His dull and sickly taste, and stirre vp appetite."

The common Elizabethan spelling was *sampire* (so the Qq and Ff).

19. ***cock***, *i.e.* cock-boat.

21. ***unnumber'd***, innumerable. See note on i. 1. 262.

28. ***another purse.*** See iv. 1. 67.

33–34. Note the confusion of constructions.

39. ***My snuff***, the useless remnant of my life. The metaphor is taken from the smoking wick of a candle.

42–43. The illusion of death may actually cause death. For *conceit*, see Glossary.

46. Edgar here assumes a different character, and pretends that he has come upon Gloucester at the bottom of the cliff.

47. ***pass***, *i.e.* pass away. Cf. v. 3. 313.

53. ***at each***, one on the top of the other.

57. ***bourn***, boundary, *i.e.* to the sea.

58. ***a-height***, *i.e.* on high, aloft.

shrill-gorged, shrill-throated.

71. ***whelk'd***, rugged as with whelks.

72. ***father***, a term of address to an old man, though used by Edgar to insinuate his relationship. See v. 3. 192.

73. ***clearest***, most pure, as frequently in Shakespeare. Cf. *The Tempest*, iii. 3. 82, " a clear life."

81. ***The safer sense***, *i.e.* sanity; *safer* = sounder, saner.

87–93. Lear's thought wanders from collecting recruits (" press-money ") to archery, then to mouse-catching, then to battle, then back again to archery and hawking, and then to sentry duty.

88. ***crow-keeper***, one who keeps crows off fields. The comparison to a crow-keeper appears to have been common in describing an awkward archer; cf. Ascham, *Toxophilus* (ed. Arber, p. 145), " An other coureth downe, and layeth out his buttockes, as though he shoulde shoote at crowes."

88–89. ***clothier's yard***, a " cloth-yard shaft," a common name for an arrow of the long-bow. Cf. the ballad of *Chevy Chase:*

" An arrow that a cloth-yarde was lang
To the harde stele halyde he."

Cf. also *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, iv. 15.

92. ***brown bills***, halberds painted brown, used by foot-soldiers.

clout, the mark shot at in archery. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 1. 136, " Indeed, a' must shoot nearer, or he'll never hit the clout."

98–99. ***had white hairs***, etc., had the wisdom of age while yet a boy.

108. ***trick***, characteristic, peculiarity.

111. ***What was thy cause?*** What were you accused of?

137. ***piece***, equivalent to " masterpiece." Cf. *The Tempest*, i. 2. 56, " Thy mother was a piece of virtue "; and *Antony and Cleopatra*, v. 2. 99, " to imagine An Antony, were nature's piece 'gainst fancy."

140. ***squiny***, squint, make eyes at. Lear does not yet recognize that Gloucester is blind. He is incapable in his madness of sympathizing with, or even appreciating, Gloucester's fate.

148. ***are you there with me?*** is that what you mean?

157–158. ***handy-dandy***. A children's game in which the onlookers are asked to say in which hand an object, that has frequently been changed from one hand to the other, finally remains; hence equivalent here to " choose which you will."

169–174. ***Plate sin . . . lips***. Omitted in the Qq.

172. ***able***, warrant, vouch for.

187. The " reason " in Lear's madness is but fitful. He has no sooner begun to moralize to Gloucester on the folly of this world than his thoughts again wander.

this', this is.

block, probably the shape of a hat; hence the succeeding thought, the hat being of felt.

199. ***a man of salt***, *i.e.* a man of tears. Cf. *Hamlet*, i. 2. 154, " the salt of most unrighteous tears "; and *Coriolanus*, v. 6. 93, " for certain drops of salt."

212. ***speed you***, *i.e.* God speed you.

214. ***vulgar***, commonly known.

217. ***the main descry***, etc., the appearance of the main body is hourly expected.

226. ***art***, acquired faculty, experience.

feeling, heartfelt; a quasi-passive sense.

227. *pregnant*, ready, disposed. Cf. ii. 1. 78.

228. *biding*, *i.e.* biding-place.

230. *To boot, and boot.* "By the repetition Gloucester wishes to convey both meanings of 'to boot,' *in addition* (to my thanks) and (the bounty of heaven) *be your help*" (Herford).

231. *framed*, formed.

233. *thyself remember*, remember and confess thy sins.

240. Edgar adopts the Somersetshire dialect. It is commonly put into the mouths of rustics in the Elizabethan drama. *Chill* is a contraction of "ich will," *chud* of "ich would"; while the *v* in *vurther*, *volk*, etc. represents the southwestern pronunciation of *f*. *Che vor ye* stands for "I warn you," and *ise* for "I shall."

247. *costard*, a humorous term for the head, literally a large kind of apple. Cf. the modern "nut."

ballow, cudgel; a dialectal word.

251. *foins*, thrusts in fencing.

256. *British*. So the Qq. The Ff read "English." Cf. iii. 4. 189.

264. *Leave*, by your leave. A similar expression occurs in *Cymbeline*, iii. 2. 35, "Good wax, thy leave," and in *Twelfth Night*, ii. 5. 103, "By your leave, wax."

275. *servant*, a regular term for a lover.

278. *undistinguish'd space*, undefinable scope. See note on i. 1. 262.

will, desire.

281. *rake up*, cover over, bury.

284. *death-practised*, whose death was plotted. See note on i. 2. 198.

286. *ingenious*, sensitive, lively.

SCENE 7

This is another of the great scenes of the play. In point of bearing on the action of the drama, it is less important than i. 4 or ii. 4, the scenes with which it ranks in dramatic power. But the play contains no more affecting picture than that of Cordelia's care for Lear, his restoration to reason in her presence, and his recognition of her.

6. *suited*, clothed.

7. *memories*, memorials; abstract for concrete.

9. ***Yet to be known shortens*** . . . , to be known as yet would impair the plan I have made.

17. ***child-changed,*** changed by the conduct of his children.

24. ***temperance,*** calmness.

38. ***Against,*** at, before, over against; as commonly in E. E.

42. ***all,*** altogether; used adverbially. Cf. i. 1. 102.

47. ***that,*** so that.

53. ***abused,*** deceived. Cf. l. 77 and iv. 1. 24.

65. ***mainly,*** perfectly. See Glossary.

67. ***nor . . . not,*** one of the commonest forms in E. E. of the double negative. Cf. v. 3. 290.

70. " The ' so I am ' of Cordelia gushes from her heart like a torrent of tears, relieving it of a weight of love and of supposed ingratitude which had pressed upon it for years " (Hazlitt).

80. ***even o'er,*** account for, fill in fully, remember clearly. The metaphor is apparently from the language of accountants. Craig compares *Macbeth,* v. 8. 60–62:

> " We shall not spend a large expense of time
> Before we reckon with your several loves,
> And make us even with you."

85–97. ***Holds it true . . . fought.*** Omitted in the Ff, like the concluding lines of iii. 7.

91. It will be remembered that Kent had declared his intention to " shape his old course in a country new " (i. 1. 190).

96. ***period,*** end aimed at. Cf. *Henry VIII,* i. 2. 209,

> " There's his period,
> To sheathe his knife in us."

ACT V — SCENE 1

This scene is a preparation for the catastrophe. It shows how the evildoers are hastening to their destruction. Whatever Albany's sympathy for Lear, he has to oppose the French invasion; but his life is plotted against by Edmund, whose patriotism is subordinate to his ambition to assume the supreme power; and Goneril and Regan are now so bitterly divided by jealousy of Edmund that the issue of the battle is to them of secondary interest.

4. ***constant pleasure,*** fixed, final resolve. Cf. i. 1. 44.

13. ***bosom'd,*** in her confidence. Cf. iv. 5. 26.

as far as we call hers, as far as anything is hers; to the utmost.

16. ***Fear,*** doubt. Cf. iii. 1. 47, and contrast iii. 5. 4 and iv. 2. 31.

23–27. ***Where I could not be honest,*** etc. In these words Albany gives the explanation of his weakness at the beginning of the play. But he is not the weak character that Goneril thought him, or that he is so often said to be.

26. ***bolds,*** emboldens: "not in so far as France emboldens (*i.e.* supports) the king."

32. ***ancient of war,*** experienced soldiers, veterans.

36. ***convenient,*** befitting, expedient.

50. ***o'erlook,*** *i.e.* "look o'er." Cf. i. 2. 40.

54. ***greet the time,*** meet the occasion.

56. ***jealous,*** suspicious.

61. ***carry out my side,*** succeed in my plan, win my object. The metaphor is taken from games. Mason quotes from Massinger's *Great Duke of Florence* (iv. 2):

> "If I hold your cards, I shall pull down the side;
> I am not good at the game."

68. ***Shall,*** *i.e.* they shall. Cf. i. 1. 213.

69. ***Stands on me,*** requires me. See note, iii. 6. 102.

SCENE 2

Mr. Spedding suggested (*New Shakspere Society's Transactions,* 1877–1879, pt. i) that the acts of *King Lear* have been wrongly divided, and that the fourth act ends at the fourth line of this scene. According to his arrangement, the battle would take place between the fourth and fifth acts. He was prompted to this suggestion by the unsatisfactory description of the battle compared with other similar descriptions in Shakespeare. "In other cases a few skilful touches bring the whole battle before us — a few rapid shiftings from one part of the field to another, a few hurried greetings of friend or foe, a few short passages of struggle, pursuit, or escape, give us token of the conflict which is raging on all sides; and, when the hero falls, we feel that his army is defeated. A page or two does it; but it is done." But in this scene "the army so long looked for, and on which everything depends, passes over the stage, and all

our hopes and sympathies go with it. Four lines are spoken. The scene does not change; but 'alarums' are heard, and 'afterwards a retreat,' and on the same field over which that great army has this moment passed, fresh and full of hope, reappears, with tidings that all is lost, the same man who last left the stage to follow and fight in it." The suggested rearrangement is plausible, for it would remove the defects alluded to without altering a word of the text. But there is nothing to show that the scene is not as Shakespeare left it. A fuller description of the battle would have tended to divert the attention from the main interest of the story. Indeed the dramatic purpose would have been as adequately fulfilled by a bare narration of the result of the battle. Moreover, the circumstances of the play demand the sympathy of the audience for the French army rather than for the British, and the sturdy Elizabethan patriotism probably weighed with Shakespeare in making the description so meager.

11. ***Ripeness***, readiness. Cf. *Hamlet*, v. 2. 234, "if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all."

SCENE 3

"The wheel is come full circle." All the chief characters, who, contrary to Shakespeare's general custom, had been brought on to the stage at the very beginning of the play to participate in an event on which the whole play turns, reappear in this last scene to "taste the wages of their virtue and the cup of their deservings." The dénouement, as in so many of Shakespeare's plays, is rapidly achieved, and somewhat resembles, with its bustle and wealth of incident, the closing scene of *Hamlet;* and, as in *Hamlet*, the guiltless fall with the guilty.

2. ***their greater pleasures***, the wills of these greater persons.

3. ***censure***, pass sentence on. See note on iii. 5. 3.

18. ***packs***, confederacies. See note on iii. 1. 26.

23. ***fire us hence like foxes.*** An allusion to the practice of smoking foxes out of their holes.

24. ***good-years.*** See Glossary.

35. ***write happy***, call yourself happy. Cf. *All's Well*, ii. 3. 208, "I must tell thee, sirrah, I write man."

49. ***To pluck . . . side***, to win the affection of the common people.

50. ***impress'd,*** pressed into our service.

lances, *i.e.* lancers.

65. ***immediacy,*** close connection with nothing intervening, *i.e.* direct tenure of authority.

68. ***addition,*** title. Cf. i. 1. 138.

72. ***That eye,*** etc. " Alluding to the proverb: ' Love being jealous makes a good eye look asquint ' " (Steevens).

74. ***stomach.*** The stomach was supposed to be the seat of anger, as the liver was of courage (ii. 2. 18). Cf. *Titus Andronicus,* iii. 1. 234, " To ease their stomachs with their bitter tongues."

76. ***the walls are thine***: apparently a metaphor signifying complete surrender. Wright thinks the words refer to Regan's castle, mentioned in l. 245. Theobald conjectured " they are all thine."

79. ***The let-alone,*** the prohibition. As events prove, Goneril has already taken means to frustrate Regan's wishes.

103. ***virtue,*** valor, as frequently in E. E. Cf. Latin *virtus.*

124. ***cope,*** commonly used transitively in E. E., as here.

129. *I.e.* It is my privilege, as I am a knight, to engage you, who are a traitor.

132. ***fire-new,*** brand-new; fresh from the fire or forge.

137. ***descent,*** " that to which one descends, the lowest part "; the only known instance of this use.

138. ***toad-spotted,*** treasonable as the toad is spotted.

143. ***say,*** proof. See Glossary.

144. ***nicely.*** See Glossary.

Edmund's character is not all bad. He could have refused to fight a nameless antagonist, but he manfully will not avail himself of this excuse. His subsequent statement, " Some good I mean to do, despite of mine own nature," is not out of keeping with his character, as it would have been with Goneril's or Regan's. Great as is his villainy, he had to some extent been prompted to it by the disabilities which he incurred by his birth and the taunts which he had to suffer even from his father.

147. ***hell-hated,*** hated like hell.

151. ***Save him, save him!*** Albany is anxious not to have Edmund killed on the spot, so that his guilt may be made known before his death.

practice, false play, treachery. Cf. i. 2. 198.

155. ***this paper,*** Goneril's love letter to Edmund; see iv. 6. 267.

160. ***Ask me not what I know.*** The Ff assign this speech to Edmund, the Qq give it to Goneril, and modern editors are divided in their choice. Those who follow the Ff ask why the question, "Know'st thou this paper?" should be addressed to Goneril, considering Albany has already said to her, "I perceive you know it." But this objection is not conclusive.

194. ***success,*** issue, result. Cf. i. 2. 157.

196. ***flaw'd,*** broken. Cf. ii. 4. 288.

204–221. ***This would . . . slave.*** Omitted in the Ff.

204. ***period,*** termination; note the different sense in iv. 7. 96.

205–207. ***but another,*** etc., but another story, amplifying what is already too much, would make what is much even more, and so pass the extreme limits.

234. ***manners:*** treated as a singular; but contrast i. 4. 184 and iv. 6. 264.

235. It is fitting that at this juncture attention should be drawn to Lear by Kent, who at the beginning of the play had professed his constant devotion to the king.

255. ***fordid,*** destroyed. Cf. I. 291.

262. ***stone,*** a crystal mirror.

263. ***the promised end,*** *i.e.* of the world. Mason compares *St. Mark,* xiii. 12 and 19. For *image of that horror,* cf. *Macbeth,* ii. 3. 82–83,

> "up, up, and see
> The great doom's image!"

285. Lear's thoughts again begin to wander. He cannot realize what Kent's devotion has been, and even the announcement of Regan's and Goneril's death has no effect.

288. ***your first of difference,*** beginning of your change.

290. ***Nor no man else,*** *i.e.* No, nor is any other man welcome.

301. ***boot,*** increase, enhancement.

305. ***poor fool,*** *i.e.* Cordelia; a common term of endearment. Some (*e.g.* Sir Joshua Reynolds) think that Lear refers to his Fool; but the Fool was not "hanged"; he has long since passed out of the play (iii. 6); and it is not likely that Lear would think of him when dying of grief at the death of Cordelia.

313. ***pass.*** Cf. iv. 6. 47.

322. ***My master,*** *i.e.* Lear. Kent's devotion is unbroken.

323–326. This concluding speech is given in the Qq to Albany, in the Ff to Edgar. It is assigned more fittingly to the latter.

APPENDIX A

THE SOURCES OF THE PLOT

The Lear story is here given as told by Raphael Holinshed, in his *Chronicles* (1577; second edition, 1587), by Higgins in *The Mirror for Magistrates* (1574), and by Spenser in the *Faërie Queene* (1590), and is followed by the passage in Sidney's *Arcadia* (1590), which is the undoubted original of the Gloucester story.

I. ***Holinshed's Chronicles.*** — *The Historie of Britain,* second edition,[1] Book ii, chapter 5, pp. 12–13.

Leir the sonne of Baldud was admitted ruler ouer the Britaines in the yeare of the world 3105, at what time Joas reigned in Juda. This Leir was a prince of right noble demeanor, gouerning his land and subiects in great wealth. He made the towne of Caerleir now called Leicester, which standeth vpon the riuer of Sore. It is written that he had by his wife three daughters without other issue, whose names were Gonorilla, Regan, and Cordeilla, which daughters he greatly loued, but specially Cordeilla the yoongest farre aboue the two elder. When this Leir therefore was come to great yeres, and began to waxe vnweldie through age, he thought to vnderstand the affections of his daughters towards him, and preferre hir whome he best loued, to the succession ouer the kingdome. Whervpon he first asked Gonorilla the eldest, how well she loued him: who calling hir gods to record, protested that she loued him more than hir owne life, which by right and reason should be most deere vnto hir. With which answer the father being well pleased, turned to the second, and demanded of hir how well she loued him: who answered (confirming hir saiengs with great othes) that she loued him more than toong could expresse, and farre aboue all other creatures of the world.

Then called he his yoongest daughter Cordeilla before him, and asked of hir what account she made of him, vnto whome she made this answer as followeth: "Knowing the great loue and fatherlie zeale that you haue alwaies borne towards me (for the which I

[1] The evidence of other plays shows that Shakespeare used the second edition; see *Shakspere's Holinshed, The Chronicle and the Historical Plays compared,* by W. G. Boswell-Stone.

maie not answere you otherwise than I thinke, and as my conscience leadeth me) I protest vnto you, that I haue loued you euer, and shall continuallie (while I liue) loue you as my naturall father. And if you would more vnderstand of the loue that I beare you, assertaine your selfe, that so much as you haue, so much you are worth, and so much I loue you, and no more." The father being nothing content with this answere, married his two eldest daughters, the one vnto Henninus the duke of Cornewall, and the other vnto Maglanus the duke of Albania, betwixt whome he willed and ordeined that his land should be deuided after his death, and the one halfe thereof immediatelie should be assigned to them in hand: but for the third daughter Cordeilla he reserued nothing.

Nevertheless it fortuned that one of the princes of Gallia (which now is called France) whose name was Aganippus, hearing of the beautie, womanhood, and good conditions of the said Cordeilla, desired to haue hir in mariage, and sent ouer to hir father, requiring that he might haue hir to wife: to whome answer was made, that he might haue his daughter, but as for anie dower he could haue none, for all was promised and assured to hir other sisters already. Aganippus notwithstanding this answer of deniall to receiue anie thing by way of dower with Cordeilla, tooke hir to wife, onlie moued thereto (I saie) for respect of hir person and amiable vertues. This Aganippus was one of the twelue kings that ruled Gallia in those daies, as in the British historie it is recorded. But to proceed.

After that Leir was fallen into age, the two dukes that had married his two eldest daughters, thinking it long yer the gouernment of the land did come to their hands, arose against him in armour, and reft from him the gouernance of the land, vpon conditions to be continued for terme of life: by the which he was put to his portion, that is, to liue after a rate assigned to him for the maintenance of his estate, which in processe of time was diminished as well by Maglanus as by Henninus. But the greatest griefe that Leir tooke, was to see the vnkindnesse of his daughters, which seemed to thinke that all was too much which their father had, the same being neuer so little: in so muche that going from the one to the other, he was brought to that miserie, that scarslie they would allow him one seruaunt to wait vpon him.

In the end, such was the vnkindnesse, or (as I maie saie) the vnnaturalnesse which he found in his two daughters, notwithstanding their faire and pleasant words vttered in time past, that being constreined of necessitie, he fled the land, & sailed into Gallia, there to seeke some comfort of his yongest daughter Cordeilla, whom before time he hated. The ladie Cordeilla hearing that he was arriued in poore estate, she first sent to him priuilie a certeine summe of monie to apparell himselfe withall, and to reteine a certeine number of seruants that might attend vpon him in honorable wise, as apperteined to the estate which he had borne: and then so accompanied, she appointed him to come to the court, which he

did, and was so ioifullie, honorablie, and louinglie receiued, both by his sonne in law Aganippus, and also by his daughter Cordeilla, that his hart was greatlie comforted: for he was no lesse honored, than if he had beene king of the whole countrie himselfe.

Now when he had informed his sonne in law and his daughter in what sort he had beene vsed by his other daughters, Aganippus caused a mightie armie to be put in a readinesse, and likewise a great nauie of ships to be rigged, to passe ouer into Britaine with Leir his father in law, to see him againe restored to his kingdome. It was accorded, that Cordeilla should also go with him to take possession of the land, the which he promised to leaue vnto hir, as the rightfull inheritour after his decesse, notwithstanding any former grant made to hir sisters or to their husbands in anie maner of wise.

Herevpon, when this armie and nauie of ships were readie, Leir and his daughter Cordeilla with hir husband tooke the sea, and arriuing in Britaine, fought with their enimies, and discomfited them in battell, in the which Maglanus and Henninus were slaine; and then was Leir restored to his kingdome, which he ruled after this by the space of two yeeres, and then died, fortie yeeres after he first began to reigne. His bodie was buried at Leicester in a vaut vnder the chanell of the riuer of Sore beneath the towne.

The Sixth Chapter. — Cordeilla the yoongest daughter of Leir was admitted Q. and supreme gouernesse of Britaine in the yeere of the world 3155, before the bylding of Rome 54; Uzia was then reigning in Juda, and Jeroboam ouer Israell. This Cordeilla after hir fathers deceasse ruled the land of Britaine right worthilie during the space of fiue yeeres, in which meane time hir husband died, and then about the end of those fiue yeeres, hir two nephewes Margan and Cunedag, sonnes to hir aforesaid sisters, disdaining to be vnder the gouernment of a woman, leuied warre against hir, and destroied a great part of the land, and finallie tooke hir prisoner, and laid hir fast in ward, wherewith she tooke suche griefe, being a woman of a manlie courage, and despairing to recouer libertie, there she slue hirselfe, when she had reigned (as before is mentioned) the tearme of fiue yeeres.

II. ***The Mirror for Magistrates.*** — From the story of *Queene Cordila*, written by John Higgins, edited by Haslewood, 1815, vol. i, pp. 124–132.

6. My grandsire *Bladud* hight, that found the bathes by skill,
A fethered King that practis'd high to soare,
Whereby hee felt the fall, God wot against his will,
And neuer went, road, raygnd, nor spake, nor flew no more.
After whose death my father *Leire* therefore
Was chosen King, by right apparent heyre,
Which after built the towne of *Leircestere*.

7. Hee had three daughters, first and eld'st hight *Gonerell*,
Next after her his yonger *Ragan* was begot:
The third and last was I the yongest, nam'd *Cordell*.
Vs all our father *Leire* did loue to well, God wot.
But minding her that lou'd him best to note,
Because hee had no sonne t'enioy his land,
Hee thought to guerdon most where fauour most hee fand.

8. What though I yongest were, yet men mee iudg'd more wise
Than either *Gonerell* or *Ragan* more of age,
And fairer farre: wherefore my sisters did despise
My grace and giefts, and sought my wrecke to wage.
But yet though vice on vertue dye with rage,
It cannot keepe her vnderneath to drowne:
For still she flittes aboue, and reaps renowne.

9. My father thought to wed vs vnto princely peeres,
And vnto them and theirs deuide and part the land.
For both my sisters first hee cal'd (as first their yeares
Requir'd), their minds, and loue, and fauoure t'vnderstand.
(Quoth hee) all doubts of duty to aband,
I must assay your friendly faithes to proue:
My daughters, tell mee how you doe mee loue.

10. Which when they aunswerd him they lou'd their father more
Then they themselues did loue, or any worldly wight,
He praised them, and sayd hee would therefore
The louing kindnes they deseru'd in fine requite.
So found my sisters fauour in his sight,
By flattery faire they won their fathers heart;
Which after turned hym and mee to smart.

11. But not content with this, hee asked mee likewise
If I did not him loue and honour well.
No cause (quoth I) there is I should your grace despise:
For nature so doth binde and duty mee compell
To loue you, as I ought my father, well.
Yet shortely I may chaunce, if Fortune will,
To finde in heart to beare another more good will.

12. Thus much I sayd of nuptiall loues that ment,
Not minding once of hatred vile or ire,
And partly taxing them, for which intent
They set my fathers heart on wrathfull fire.
"Shee neuer shall to any part aspire,
Of this my realme (quoth hee) among'st you twayne:
But shall without all dowry aie remaine."

13. Then to *Maglaurus* Prince, with Albany hee gaue
My sister *Gonerell*, the eldest of vs all:
And eke my sister *Ragan* to *Hinniue* to haue,
And for her dowry *Camber* and *Cornwall*.
These after him should haue his Kingdome all.
Betweene them both hee gaue it franke and free,
But nought at all hee gaue of dowry mee.

14. At last it chaunst a Prince of *Fraunce* to heare my fame.
My beauty braue, my wit was blaz'd abroad ech where.
My noble vertues prais'd mee to my fathers blame,
Who did for flattery mee lesse friendly fauour beare.
Which when this worthy Prince (I say) did heare,
Hee sent ambassage, lik'd mee more then life,
And soone obtayned mee to bee his wife.

15. Prince *Aganippus* reau'd mee of my woe,
And that for vertues sake, of dowryes all the best:
So I contented was to Fraunce my father fro
For to depart, and hoapt t'enioy some greater rest.
Where liuing well belou'd, my ioyes encreast:
I gate more fauour in that Prince his sight,
Then euer Princesse of a Princely wight.

16. But while that I these ioyes so well enioy'd in *Fraunce*,
My father *Leire* in *Britayne* waxt unweldy old.
Whereon his daughters more themselues aloft t'aduance
Desir'd the Realme to rule it as they wolde.
Their former loue and friendship waxed cold,
Their husbands rebels voyde of reason quite
Rose vp, rebeld, bereft his crowne and right:

17. Caus'd him agree they might in parts equall
Deuide the Realme, and promist him a gard
Of sixty Knights on him attending still at call.
But in six monthes such was his hap to hard,
That *Gonerell* of his retinue barde
The halfe of them, shee and her husband reft,
And scarce alow'd the other halfe they left.

18. Eke as in *Albany* lay hee lamenting fates,
When as my sister so sought all his vtter spoyle:
The meaner vpstart courtiers thought themselues his mates,
His daughter him disdayn'd and forced not his foyle.
Then was hee fayne for succoure his to toyle
With halfe his trayne to *Cornwall*, there to lie
In greatest neede, his *Ragans* loue to try.

19. So when hee came to *Cornwall*, shee with ioy
Receiued him, and Prince *Maglaurus* did the like.
There hee abode a yeare, and liu'd without anoy:
But then they tooke all his retinue from him quite
Saue only ten, and shew'd him daily spite:
Which he bewayl'd complayning durst not striue,
Though in disdayne they last alow'd but fiue.

20. What more despite could deuelish beasts deuise,
Then ioy their fathers woefull days to see?
What vipers vile could so their King despise,
Or so vnkinde, so curst, so cruell bee?
From thence agayn hee went to *Albany*,
Where they bereau'd his seruants all saue one,
Bad him content him selfe with that, or none.

21. Eke at what time hee ask'd of them to haue his gard,
To gard his noble grace where so hee went:
They cal'd him doting foole, all his requests debard,
Demaunding if with life hee were not well content:
Then hee to late his rigour did repent
Gaynst mee, my sisters' fawning loue that knew,
Found flattery false, that seem'd so faire in vew.

22. To make it short, to *Fraunce* hee came at last to mee,
And told mee how my sisters euell their father vsde.
Then humbly I besought my noble King so free,
That he would aide my father thus by his abusde:
Who nought at all my humble hest refusde,
But sent to euery coast of *Fraunce* for aide,
Whereby King *Leire* might home bee well conueyde.

23. The souldiours gathered from ech quarter of the land
Came at the length to know the noble Princes will:
Who did commit them vnto captaynes euery band,
And I likewise of loue and reuerent meere good will
Desir'd my Lord, he would not take it ill
If I departed for a space withall,
To take a part, or ease my father's thrall.

24. Hee granted my request: Thence wee ariued here,
And of our *Britaynes* came to aide likewise his right
Full many subiects, good and stout that were:
By martiall feats, and force, by subiects sword and might,
The *British* Kings were fayne to yeeld our right:
Which wonne, my father well this Realme did guide
Three yeares in peace, and after that hee dyde.

III. *Spenser's Faërie Queene.* — Book ii, canto x, 27–32.

27. Next him king Leyr in happie peace long raynd,
But had no issue male him to succeed,
But three faire daughters, which were well uptraind
In all that seemed fitt for kingly seed;
Mongst whom his realme he equally decreed
To have divided. Tho when feeble age
Nigh to his utmost date he saw proceed,
He cald his daughters, and with speeches sage
Inquyrd, which of them most did love her parentage.

28. The eldest, Gonorill, gan to protest,
That she much more than her owne life him lov'd;
And Regan greater love to him profest
Then all the world, when ever it were proov'd;
But Cordeill said she lov'd him as behoov'd:
Whose simple answer, wanting colours fayre
To paint it forth, him to displeasaunce moov'd,
That in his crowne he counted her no hayre,
But twixt the other twaine his kingdom whole did shayre.

29. So wedded th'one to Maglan King of Scottes,
And thother to the king of Cambria,
And twixt them shayrd his realme by equall lottes;
But without dowre the wise Cordelia
Was sent to Aggannip of Celtica.
Their aged syre, thus eased of his crowne,
A private life led in Albania
With Gonorill, long had in great renowne,
That nought him griev'd to beene from rule deposed downe.

30. But true it is that, when the oyle is spent,
The light goes out, and weeke is throwne away;
So when he had resignd his regiment,
His daughter gan despise his drouping day,
And wearie wax of his continuall stay.
Tho to his daughter Regan he repayrd,
Who him at first well used every way;
But when of his departure she despayrd,
Her bountie she abated, and his cheare empayrd.

31. The wretched man gan then avise too late,
That love is not where most it is profest;
Too truely tryde in his extremest state.
At last resolv'd likewise to prove the rest,
He to Cordelia him selfe addrest,

Who with entyre affection him receav'd,
As for her syre and king her seemed best;
And after all an army strong she leav'd,
To war on those which him had of his realme bereav'd.

32. So to his crowne she him restor'd againe,
In which he dyde, made ripe for death by eld,
And after wild it should to her remaine:
Who peacefully the same long time did weld,
And all mens harts in dew obedience held;
Till that her sisters children, woxen strong,
Through proud ambition against her rebeld,
And overcommen kept in prison long,
Till weary of that wretched life her selfe she hong.

IV. ***Sidney's Arcadia.*** — Book ii, chapter 10; edition of 1590, fol. 142–144.

The pitifull state, and storie of the Paphlagonian vnkinde King, and his kind sonne, first related by the son, then by the blind father.

It was in the kingdome of *Galacia*, the season being (as in the depth of winter) very cold, and as then sodainely growne to so extreame and foule a storme, that neuer any winter (I thinke) brought foorth a fowler child: so that the Princes were euen compelled by the haile, that the pride of the winde blew into their faces, to seeke some shrowding place within a certaine hollow rocke offering it vnto them, they made it their shield against the tempests furie. And so staying there, till the violence therof was passed, they heard the speach of a couple, who not perceiuing them (being hidde within that rude canapy) helde a straunge and pitifull disputation which made them steppe out; yet in such sort, as they might see vnseene. There they perceaued an aged man, and a young, scarcely come to the age of a man, both poorely arayed, extreamely weather-beaten; the olde man blinde, the young man leading him: and yet through all those miseries, in both these seemed to appeare a kind of noblenesse, not sutable to that affliction. But the first words they heard, were these of the old man. Well *Leonatus* (said he) since I cannot perswade thee to lead me to that which should end my griefe, & thy trouble, let me now entreat thee to leaue me: feare not, my miserie cannot be greater then it is, & nothing doth become me but miserie; feare not the danger of my blind steps, I cannot fall worse then I am. And doo not I pray thee, doo not obstinately continue to infect thee with my wretchednes. But flie, flie from this region, onely worthy of me. Deare father (answered he) doo not take away from me the onely remnant of my happinesse: while I haue power to doo you seruice, I am not wholly miserable. Ah my sonne (said he,

and with that he groned, as if sorrow straue to breake his hearte) how euill fits it me to haue such a sonne, and how much doth thy kindnesse vpbraide my wickednesse? These dolefull speeches, and some others to like purpose (well shewing they had not bene borne to the fortune they were in,) moued the Princes to goe out vnto them, and aske the younger what they were? Sirs (answered he, with a good grace, and made the more agreable by a certaine noble kinde of pitiousnes) I see well you are straungers, that know not our miserie so well here knowne, that no man dare know, but that we must be miserable. In deede our state is such, as though nothing is so needfull vnto vs as pittie, yet nothing is more daungerous vnto vs, then to make our selues so knowne as may stirre pittie. But your presence promiseth, that cruelty shall not ouer-runne hate. And if it did, in truth our state is soncke below the degree of feare.

This old man (whom I leade) was lately rightfull Prince of this countrie of *Paphlagonia*, by the hard-hearted vngratefulnes of a sonne of his, depriued, not onely of his kingdome (wherof no forraine forces were euer able to spoyle him) but of his sight, the riches which Nature graunts to the poorest creatures. Whereby, & by other his vnnaturall dealings, he hath bin driuen to such griefe, as euen now he would haue had me to haue led him to the toppe of this rocke, thence to cast himselfe headlong to death: and so would haue made me (who receiued my life of him) to be the worker of his destruction. But noble Gentlemen (said he) if either of you haue a father, and feele what duetifull affection is engraffed in a sonnes hart, let me intreate you to conuey this afflicted Prince to some place of rest & securitie. Amongst your worthie actes it shall be none of the least, that a King, of such might and fame, and so vniustly oppressed, is in any sort by you relieued.

But before they could make him answere, his father began to speake. Ah my sonne (said he) how euill an Historian are you, that leaue out the chiefe knotte of all the discourse? my wickednes, my wickednes. And if thou doest it to spare my eares, (the onely sense nowe left me proper for knowledge) assure thy selfe thou dost mistake me. And I take witnesse of that Sunne which you see (with that he cast vp his blinde eyes, as if he would hunt for light,) and wish my selfe in worse case then I do wish my selfe, which is as euill as may be, if I speake vntruly; that nothing is so welcome to my thoughts, as the publishing of my shame. Therefore know you Gentlemen (to whom from my harte I wish that it may not proue ominous foretoken of misfortune to haue mette with such a miser as I am) that whatsoeuer my sonne (ô God, that trueth binds me to reproch him with the name of my sonne) hath said, is true. But besides those truthes, this also is true, that hauing had in lawful mariage, of a mother fitte to beare royall children, this sonne (such one as partly you see, and better shall knowe by my shorte declaration) and so enioyed the expectations in the world of him, till he was

growen to iustifie their expectations (so as I needed enuie no father for the chiefe comfort of mortalitie, to leaue an other ones-selfe after me) I was caried by a bastarde sonne of mine (if at least I be bounde to beleeue the words of that base woman my concubine, his mother) first to mislike, then to hate, lastly to destroy, to doo my best to destroy, this sonne (I thinke you thinke) vndeseruing destruction. What waies he vsed to bring me to it, if I should tell you, I should tediously trouble you with as much poysonous hypocrisie, desperate fraude, smoothe malice, hidden ambition, & smiling enuie, as in anie liuing person could be harbored. But I list it not, no remembrance, (no, of naughtines) delights me, but mine own; & me thinks, the accusing his traines might in some manner excuse my fault, which certainly I loth to doo. But the conclusion is, that I gaue order to some seruants of mine, whom I thought as apte for such charities as my selfe, to leade him out into a forrest, & there to kill him.

But those theeues (better natured to my sonne then my selfe) spared his life, letting him goe, to learne to liue poorely: which he did, giuing himselfe to be a priuate souldier, in a countrie here by. But as he was redy to be greatly aduanced for some noble peeces of seruice which he did, he hearde newes of me: who (dronke in my affection to that vnlawfull and vnnaturall sonne of mine) suffered my self so to be gouerned by him, that all fauours and punishments passed by him, all offices, and places of importance, distributed to his fauorites; so that ere I was aware, I had left my self nothing but the name of a King: which he shortly wearie of too, with many indignities (if any thing may be called an indignity, which was laid vpon me) threw me out of my seat, and put out my eies; and then (proud in his tyrannie) let me goe, nether imprisoning, nor killing me: but rather delighting to make me feele my miserie; miserie indeed, if euer there were any; full of wretchednes, fuller of disgrace, and fullest of guiltines. And as he came to the crowne by so vniust meanes, as vniustlie he kept it, by force of stranger souldiers in *Cittadels*, the nestes of tyranny, & murderers of libertie; disarming all his own countrimen, that no man durst shew himself a wel-willer of mine: to say the trueth (I think) few of them being so (considering my cruell follie to my good sonne, and foolish kindnes to my vnkinde bastard:) but if there were any who fell to pitie of so great a fall, and had yet any sparkes of vnstained duety lefte in them towardes me, yet durst they not shewe it, scarcely with giuing me almes at their doores; which yet was the onelie sustenance of my distressed life, no bodie daring to shewe so much charitie, as to lende me a hande to guide my darke steppes: Till this sonne of mine (God knowes, woorthie of a more vertuous, and more fortunate father) forgetting my abhominable wrongs, not recking daunger, & neglecting the present good way he was in doing himselfe good, came hether to doo this kind office you see him performe towards me, to my vnspeak-

able griefe; not onely because his kindnes is a glasse euen to my blind eyes, of my naughtines, but that aboue all griefes, it greeues me he should desperatly aduenture the losse of his soul-deseruing life for mine, that yet owe more to fortune for my deserts, as if he would cary mudde in a chest of christall. For well I know, he that now raigneth, how much soeuer (and with good reason) he despiseth me, of all men despised; yet he will not let slippe any aduantage to make away him, whose iust title (ennobled by courage and goodnes) may one day shake the seate of a neuer secure tyrannie. And for this cause I craued of him to leade me to the toppe of this rocke, indeede I must confesse, with meaning to free him from so serpentine a companion as I am. But he finding what I purposed, onely therein since he was borne, shewed himselfe disobedient vnto me. And now Gentlemen, you haue the true storie, which I pray you publish to the world, that my mischieuous proceedings may be the glorie of his filiall pietie, the onely reward now left for so great a merite. And if it may be, let me obtaine that of you, which my sonne denies me: for neuer was there more pity in sauing any, then in ending me; both because therein my agonies shall ende, and so shall you preserue this excellent young man, who els wilfully folowes his owne ruine.

APPENDIX B

METRE[1]

1. Blank Verse

The normal verse consists of ten syllables alternately stressed and unstressed, beginning with an unstressed syllable, without rhyme (hence called "blank verse"), and with a sense pause at the end of the line, *e.g.:*

He raised' the house' with loud' and cow'ard cries' (ii. 4. 43).
Return' to her,' and fif'ty men' dismiss'd'? (ii. 4. 210).

As the line contains five feet, each of two syllables, and each stressed on the second syllable, it is commonly called an *iambic pentameter.*

2. Normal Variations

A succession of such lines, however, would be monotonous. Accordingly, there are several variations in the rhythm.

(*a*) *Stress Inversion.* — The normal order of *non-stress* and *stress* may be inverted; *e.g.* in the various feet:

(1) Why' have | my sisters husbands, if they say (i. 1. 101).
(2) But love, | dear' love, | and our aged father's right (iv. 4. 28).
(3) Which I must act: | brief'ness | and fortune, work! (ii. 1. 20).
(4) Let me beseech your grace | not' to | do so (ii. 2. 147).
(5) Though I condemn not, yet, under | par'don (i. 4. 365).

This inversion occurs commonly after a pause, and is thus found most frequently in the first, third, and fourth feet, *i.e.* after the pauses at the beginning or centre of the line. It is seldom found in the second foot, and it is very rare in the fifth foot. When it occurs in the fifth foot the effect is generally unrhythmical.

There are occasionally two inversions in the same line, *e.g.:*

(1, 4) Broth'er, | a word; descend: | broth'er, | I say! (ii. 1. 21).
(1, 4) Bold' in | the quarrel's right, | roused' to | the encounter (ii. 1. 56).

[1] This appendix has been suggested largely by the "Outline of Shakespeare's Prosody" in Professor Herford's *Richard II.*

(1, 3) None′ does | offend, | none,′ I | say, none; I 'll able 'em (iv. 6. 172).

Two inversions rarely come together, as in i. 4. 365.

(*b*) *Stress Variation.* — The stresses may vary in degree; a weak or intermediate stress (`) may be substituted for a strong stress (′).

And dare, | upon` | the war | rant of` | my note (iii. 1. 18).

The weak stress is particularly common in the fifth foot, *e.g.:*

Which else were shame, that then neces | sity` (i. 4. 232).

There are, in fact, comparatively few lines with the normal five strong stresses. But there are certain limits to the variations: *e.g.* there are never more than two weak-stressed feet in a line, and two weak-stressed feet rarely come together (see, however, iii. 4. 15). Frequently the absence of a strong stress in a foot is made up for by (1) two weak stresses, as:

Prith′ee | go` in` | thyself′; seek thine own ease (iii. 4. 23);

or (2) an additional stress in a neighboring foot, either before or after, as:

Both′ wel′ | come and` | protection. Take up thy master (iii. 6. 99).

The les | ser is` | scarce′ felt.′ | Thou 'ldst shun a bear (iii. 4. 9).

Two strong stresses are fairly common in the fifth foot, *e.g.:*

Although | the last | not least, | to whose | young′ love′.

(Cf. i. 1. 148, iii. 2. 42, iv. 6. 187.)

(*c*) *Addition of Unstressed Syllables.* — An unstressed syllable is frequently added. It may be introduced in any foot, which then corresponds to an anapæst instead of an iambus.

(1) I am al | most mad myself: I had a son (iii. 4. 171).
(2) And when | I have stol'n | upon these sons-in-law (iv. 6. 190).
(3) Thou 'ldst meet the bear | i' the mouth. | When the mind 's free (iii. 4. 11).
(4) Whereto our health is bound; | we are not | ourselves (ii. 4. 108).
(5) You sulphurous and thought-exe | cuting fires (iii. 2. 4).

Occasionally there are two such extra syllables in the same line, *e.g.:*

(2, 4) When maj | esty stoops | to fol | ly. Reverse | thy doom (i. 1. 151).

But see 4 (*b*) (1) (2). These additional syllables within the line occur commonly at the pause or *cæsura*.

Extra-metrical. — This additional unstressed syllable is most commonly found at the end of the line, where it is extra-metrical, *e.g.:*

I tax not you, you elements, with unkind | ness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you chil | dren (iii. 2. 16–17).

It forms what is known as a *double* or *feminine ending*. It is comparatively rare in Shakespeare's early plays, but it becomes more and more common, until in *The Tempest* it occurs once in every three lines. Of the 2238 lines of blank verse in *King Lear*, 567 have double endings.[1]

Two extra unstressed syllables are occasionally found at the end of a line, *e.g.:*

My heart into my mouth: I love your maj | esty (i. 1. 94).
That he suspects none: on whose foolish hon | esty (i. 2. 197).

But no sharp division can be made between a line such as this and a six-stressed line or Alexandrine (3 (*a*)); and it is sometimes best to consider the first of the two extra syllables as slurred (4 (*b*) (1) (2)).

Examples of these extra syllables are common in lines containing proper names, *e.g.:*

And you, our no less loving son of Al | bany (i. 1. 43).

But most lines containing proper names contain an extra *stressed* syllable, *e.g.* i. 1. 46. Such lines are especially common in the English Histories. "They appear to be often on principle extra-metrical, and in any case comply very loosely with the metre."

(*d*) *Omission of Unstressed Syllables.* — On the other hand, an unstressed syllable is sometimes, though rarely, omitted, *e.g.:*

— Ay, | and lay | ing au | tumn's dust. | Good sir (iv. 6. 201).
As may | compact | it more. | — Get | you gone (i. 4. 362).

Such omissions generally occur after a marked pause, and hence (1) are found commonly, like stress inversion, in the first, third, and fourth feet; and (2) are frequently caused by a change of speaker, *e.g.:*

Edg. Hark, do | you hear | the sea?
Glou. — No' | truly (iv. 6. 4).

[1] See Fleay's *Shakespeare Manual*, p. 136.

(*e*) *Pauses.* — The normal verse has a sense pause at the end of the line, and a slighter pause (cæsura) within it. These are clearly marked in early blank verse (*e.g. Gorboduc*), where the pause within the line falls commonly after the second foot. The varied position of this pause, and the omission of the pause at the end of the line, constitute, in Shakespeare's later plays, his commonest departure from the normal type. The lines in which the sense is, in Milton's words, "variously drawn out from one verse into another," are called *run-on* or *unstopped* lines; while the non-coincidence of the full sense with the end of the line forms what is known as *enjambement* or *overflow*. Like the double or feminine ending, the run-on line was gradually used more and more by Shakespeare. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, a typical early play, it occurs about once in every eighteen lines, while in *The Tempest*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Winter's Tale* it occurs on an average of twice in every five lines.

(*f*) *Light and Weak Endings.* — The most pronounced form of the run-on line is that with a *light* or *weak* ending. Such endings have the distinctive quality of being monosyllabic. Thus:

> Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
> The region of my heart (i. 1. 146).

is merely an instance of a run-on line. But there is a *light* ending in

> You have begot me, bred me, loved me! I
> Return those duties (i. 1. 98–99).

and in

> How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
> To have a thankless child (i. 4. 310–311).

The difference between *light* and *weak* endings is that "the voice can to a small extent dwell" on the former; while the latter so "precipitate the reader forward" that he is "forced to run them, in pronunciation no less than in sense, into the closest connection with the opening words of the succeeding line." Hence *light* endings consist of the auxiliaries, personal pronouns, etc., and *weak* endings of prepositions, conjunctions, etc. They are characteristic of Shakespeare's later plays; some of his earlier plays, *e.g.* the *Comedy of Errors* and the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, do not contain a single instance of them. Of the two, the *light* ending was the earlier in use, and it is always the commoner; but its relative importance gradually diminished. Thus, in *Macbeth*, for 21 *light* endings there are only 2 *weak* endings, but in *The Winter's Tale* the

numbers are respectively 57 and 43.[1] There does not appear to be any instance in *King Lear* of a *weak* ending; the following example is taken from *Henry VIII*, iii. 2. 173:

> To the good of your most sacred person and
> The profit of the state.

It should be noted that the closing of a line with a preposition or other similar word is not alone sufficient to constitute a *weak* ending; *e.g.* iv. 7. 16. Lines closing in *so* followed by *as* (*e.g.* v. 3. 36) generally form *light* endings.

3. Occasional Variations

(*a*) *Addition of Stressed Syllables.* — Lines are occasionally found with six stressed syllables (*i.e.* with an additional foot), *e.g.*:

> To speak and purpose not: since what I well intend (i. 1. 228).

The pause in the six-stressed line (commonly called an *Alexandrine*) is found most frequently after the third foot. It occurs after the first in ii. 2. 153, and after the fourth in iv. 3. 44. It is generally very marked; hence it often occurs when there is a change of speaker, *e.g.*:

> *France.* Could never plant in me.
> *Cor.* I yet beseech your majesty (i. 1. 226).

(*b*) *Omission of Stressed Syllables.* — Lines with only four stressed syllables are much rarer. The omission of the stress likewise may generally be accounted for by a marked pause. Hence it also occurs most commonly at a break in the dialogue, *e.g.*:

> *Lear.* Come.
> *Edm.* Come hither, captain; hark (v. 3. 26).

Indeed a marked pause is the source of most metrical irregularities.

(*c*) *Short or Broken Lines.* — There are many short lines containing only *one* to *four* feet. They occur most frequently at the beginning or end of a speech; but there are several examples of them in *King Lear* in the middle of a speech, where they mark the completion or change of a subject or idea. These short lines, however, generally consist of questions, commands, exclamations, addresses, etc.: *e.g.* i. 4. 239, i. 1. 278, iv. 5. 36, i. 4. 284. Some of

[1] See Professor Ingram's paper in the *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1874, pt. ii.

the shorter lines may be regarded as extra-metrical. It will be noted that the short line is especially frequent in the more passionate speeches: *e.g.* i. 4. 299, ii. 4. 286, and iv. 6. 112–129.

The broken speech ending is a characteristic of the later plays.

4. Apparent Variations

Many apparent irregularities are due to difference of pronunciation in Shakespeare's time.

(*a*) *Accentual.* — The accent has changed in many words: *e.g.* Shakespeare always has *aspéct* (ii. 2. 112), *impórtune* (iii. 4. 166) and *sepúlchre* — the verb — (ii. 4. 134). *Retinue* has the accent on the second syllable in i. 4. 221, and *observants* has it on the first in ii. 2. 109 — the only occasions in Shakespeare in which these words occur in verse. *Consort*, as a noun in the sense of company, is accented on the last syllable (ii. 1. 99).

Certain words had not a fixed pronunciation. It is often only by the position of the word in the verse that we can decide on which syllable the accent falls. Thus the noun *sepulchre* has usually the accent on the first syllable, but in *Richard II*, i. 3. 196, it is pronounced, like the verb, with the accent on the second syllable. Similarly *revénue* in i. 1. 139 and ii. 1. 102, but *révenue* in *Richard II*, i. 4. 46; *éxtreme* (iv. 6. 26), but *extrémest* (v. 3. 136). Note also *síncere* in ii. 2. 111. In general an adjective preceding a noun of one syllable, or a noun accented on the first syllable, is not accented on the last. A striking example of this accentual change is found in *Henry VIII*, v. i. 132:

> Might *córrupt* minds procure knaves as *corrúpt*.

The same change invariably takes place in such two-syllabled adjectives as *complete, exact, obscure, extreme, sincere*, etc.[1] The pronunciation which now survives is generally that which represents most closely the Latin quantity. The *English* accentuation of these Romance words tended in Shakespeare's time to make the stress fall on the first syllable; but the influence of Latin has frequently in Modern English restored the accent to its original place.

(*b*) *Syllabic.* — (1) A vowel may be lost before a consonant at the beginning of a word: *e.g.* *'scape, 'gainst, 'bove; and's* for *and his*, *'t* for *it*, *'s* for *his* (i. 4. 114), for *us* (iii. 4. 110), and for *is* (iv. 6. 163). Cf. *this'* for *this is* (iv. 6. 187).

The same omission takes place within a word (syncope):

[1] See Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon*, vol. ii, Appendix.

a. In the inflexion, as in the past tense and past participle, in the second person singular, as *mean'st* (ii. 2. 114), in the possessive, as *Phœbus'* (ii. 2. 114), and in the superlative (*'st* for *est*). These shortened forms become more and more common in Shakespeare.

b. In the second last syllable of words of three syllables accented on the first: *e.g. courtẹsy*[1] (ii. 4. 182) and *majẹsty* (i. 1. 151), though *ma-jẹs-ty* (v. 3. 299). This contracted pronunciation has become fixed in such words as *business, medicine.* It is most commonly caused by a "vowel-like" (see (3) below).

(2) Two vowels coming together may coalesce, whether in the same word or in adjacent words: *e.g. influ͡ence* (ii. 2. 113), *radi͡ant* (ii. 2. 113), *mater͡ial* (iv. 2. 35), *vi͡olent* (iv. 7. 28), *immedi͡acy* (v. 3. 65), *soci͡ety* (v. 3. 210), *the͡ expense* (ii. 1. 102), *the͡ untented* (i. 4. 322). *Royal* and *loyal* are generally dissyllabic.

There is no definite pronunciation of the terminations *-ion, -ious, -eous*, etc. Thus we find *conditi-on* (iv. 7. 57), but *benedi͡ction* (iv. 7. 58), and *gorge-ous* (ii. 4. 271) but *gorge͡ous* (ii. 4. 272). The contracted pronunciation — that now in vogue — is the more common in Shakespeare's verse, though the dissyllabic pronunciation was recognized throughout the seventeenth century.[2]

(3) The liquids *l, m, n*, and *r* have the function of either a consonant or a vowel, and are therefore called "vowel-likes."

a. By the consonant (non-syllabic) function they may cause the loss of a syllable, either immediately before or after: *e.g. amọrous* (i. 1. 48), *murdẹrous* (ii. 1. 64), *stubbọrn* (ii. 2. 134), *pelịcan* (iii. 4. 77), *memọries* (iv. 7. 7), *temperance* (iv. 7. 24), *victọry* (v. 1. 41), *countẹnance* (v. 1. 63), *prisọners* (v. 3. 75), *intẹrest* (v. 3. 85), *privịlege* (v. 3. 129), *absọlute* (v. 3. 300). Also in words of four syllables: *e.g. unfortụnate* (iv. 6. 68), *desperately* (v. 3. 292), and *particular* (v. 1. 30), though *partic-u-lars* (i. 4. 286).

b. By the vowel (syllabic) function they may form a new syllable: *e.g. entrance*, sometimes written *enterance, through*, sometimes written *thorough, hel-m* (iv. 7. 36), but *helm* (iv. 2. 57), *light-n-ing* (iv. 7. 35), but *light-ning* (ii. 4. 167).

The vowel-like *r* frequently resolves a preceding long vowel or diphthong into two syllables: *e.g.* such words as *hour, hire, fire* are sometimes dissyllabic.

(4) Sometimes a consonant, usually *th* or *v*, coming between two vowels is omitted, the vowels coalescing; in these cases the second vowel is followed by *r* or *n*. Thus *even* (adv.) is generally

[1] The mark (.) under a vowel means that it is mute.
[2] See Sweet's *History of English Sounds*, § 915.

a monosyllable; so also *ever, never, over*, often written *e'er, ne'er, o'er*. The *th* is often omitted in *whether* (sometimes written *where*), *rather*, etc.

5. Rhyme

According to Mr. Fleay's calculation, there are seventy-four rhymed lines in *King Lear*. Shakespeare's use of rhyme gradually diminished, but he retained throughout his career the couplet at the end of a scene. There are several instances of it in *King Lear*, *e.g.* i. 2, iv. 7, v. 1, and v. 3. Rhyme also marks the close of a speech and the exit of an actor, *e.g.* i. 1. 257–264. In iv. 6. 284–285 it is used to mark a change of subject. It has also the closely connected purpose of giving point to the expression (*e.g.* i. 1. 276–277, i. 4. 338–339); and hence it readily lends itself, by reason of this epigrammatic force, to clinching the argument and making an effective ending. The only rhymed passage of any length occurs at the end of iii. 6. It illustrates the use of rhyme in passages of moralizing or of "*plaintive* emotion." Rhyme is not used in passages of passionate emotion, — the tendency is rather to pass into prose, — nor for narrative, nor for the development of the action of the drama.

GLOSSARY

advise (ii. 1. 29), reflect, consider; used reflexively. Similarly *advice* = consideration, judgment. O.Fr. *aviser*, *avis*, Late Lat. *ad-visum*. Originally "the way in which a matter is looked at, opinion, judgment" (Murray).

aidant (iv. 4. 17), helpful. O.Fr. *aidant*, pres. part. of *aider*.

alarum'd (ii. 1. 55), aroused, called to arms. *Alarum* is another form of *alarm*. O.Fr. *alarme*, Italian *allarme* = *all' arme!* "To arms!" Thus originally an interjection, but used later as a name for the summons to arms. The derivative sense of "fright," which is confined to the form *alarm*, is not found in Shakespeare.

allow (ii. 4. 194), approve of, sanction. O.Fr. *alouer*, representing both Lat. *allaudare*, to praise, and *allocare*, to place, assign. Hence the two senses of "approving" and "granting," which are so close as to blend. The former sense is more common in M.E. and E.E., the latter in Mod. E. Cf. **allowance** (i. 4. 228), approval.

an (i. 4. 112; ii. 2. 48, 106; ii. 4. 65), if. Spelled *and* in the Qq and F1, and generally in E.E. Its derivation is uncertain, but it is probably the same word as the coördinate.

attaint (v. 3. 83), impeachment. O.Fr. *ateinte*, from p.p. of *ateindre*, "to attain," hence "to strike, condemn." Lat. *attingere*, "to touch upon." It is a distinct word from *taint*, "stain," which comes from Fr. *teindre*, Lat. *tingere* or *tinguere*.

attend (ii. 1. 127; ii. 4. 36), await. O.Fr. *atendre*, L. *ad* + *tendre*. Primarily "to stretch to." Hence the meanings "to direct the mind to," "to look after," "wait upon," and "to wait for."

avaunt (iii. 6. 68), begone! Fr. *avant*, forward! Lat. *ab ante*.

bandy (i. 4. 92; ii. 4. 178). The origin is obscure. Fr. *bander*, to strike a ball to and fro, as in tennis; perhaps from *bande*, a side.

benison (i. 1. 269; iv. 6. 229), blessing. M.E. *beneysun*, O.Fr. *beneison*, Lat. *benedictionem;* hence a doublet of "benediction."

boot (iv. 6. 230; v. 3. 301). O.E. *bót*, advantage, good, profit; related in derivation to "better," "best." It occurs commonly in the phrase *to boot*, "to the good," "in addition," as in iv. 6. 230. The verb is represented in M.E. by *bōten*.

caitiff (iii. 2. 55), wretch. Norm. Fr. *caitif*, "captive," "miserable," Lat. *captivum*. Its Norman origin is shown by the retention of the Latin *c* before *a*. French dialects generally represented this *c* by *ch*: cf. *castle* and Fr. *château*, *caitiff* and Fr. *chētif*. There was an early English variant *chaitif*, which came from a central Fr.

form. The word is occasionally used in E.E. in the original sense, "captive."

can (iv. 4. 8). O.E. *cunnan*, "The O. Teut. sense was 'to know, know how, be mentally or intellectually able,' whence 'to be able generally, be physically able, have the power'" (Murray).

champains (i. 1. 65), or *champaigns*, plains. M.E. *champayne*, O.Fr. *champaigne*, Lat. *campania;* ultimately from Lat. *campus*, a level field. The word was taken into English in the central French form *champaigne*, not in the Norman French form *campaigne* (Murray); contrast *caitiff*.

cockney (ii. 4. 123), a pampered, affected woman; see note. M.E. *cokeney*, apparently *coken*, "of cocks" + *ey*, "egg"; thus literally "cock's egg." The word was either a child's name for an egg, or a name for a small or misshapen egg. It was then applied as a humorous or derisive name for an unduly pampered child, a milksop. From this it was applied to a townsman, as being effeminate in comparison with a countryman. Finally it has got its modern special reference to a native of London (Murray).

comforting (iii. 5. 21), aiding, assisting; a common legal sense. O.Fr. *conforter*, Lat. *confortare*, to strengthen, *con* intensive + *fortis*, strong. In legal phraseology it is commonly used along with the synonymous word "aiding," *e.g.* "aiding and comforting," "giving aid and comfort."

commend (ii. 4. 28; iii. 1. 19), deliver, commit. Through O.Fr. from Lat. *commendare*, *com* + *mandare*, to commit to one's care. The secondary sense of "praising" arose from the idea that what is committed is worthy of acceptance. The sense of "committing" survives in such phrases as "commend to memory"; but it was much commoner in E.E. than the sense of "praising."

compeers (v. 3. 69), equals, is a compeer with. O.Fr. *comper*, *com* + *per*, a peer (in Mod. Fr. *pair*), Lat. *parem*.

conceit (iv. 6. 42), imagination, illusion. Probably formed from *conceive* on the analogy of *deceit*, *deceive*, there being apparently no corresponding O.Fr. word. It never occurs in Shakespeare in the modern sense of "high opinion of oneself."

convey (i. 2. 109), carry out, do secretly. M.E. *conveien*, O.Fr. *conveier*, Late Lat. *conviare*, *con* + *via*. Originally "to accompany on the way," "to convoy"; but used later of inanimate things = "to transport, carry," and especially with a sense of secrecy. Cf. i. 4. 300.

cozen'd (v. 3. 154), cheated, beguiled. The derivation is uncertain. It has commonly been connected with Fr. *cousiner*, defined by Cotgrave, 1611, as "to clayme kindred for advantage, or particular ends; as he who, to save charges in travelling, goes from house to house as *cosin* to the honor of everyone." But there is no idea of "pretext of relationship" in *cozen* in E.E., in which the meaning is simply to "cheat." Cf. **cozener**, iv. 6. 167.

curious (i. 4. 35), complicated, intricate. O.Fr. *curius*, Lat. *curiosus*, full of care, scrupulous. Cf. **curiosity**, "scruples," i. 2. 4, "nicety of suspicion," i. 4. 75, and "careful investigation," i. 1. 6.

darkling (i. 4. 207), in the dark. M.E. *darkeling*, *dark* + *ling*,

an old adverbial formative. Cf. *flatling* or *flatlong, headling* or *headlong, sidelong*.

debosh'd (i. 4. 237), an early variant of "debauched." Taken, about 1600, from Fr. *débaucher*, to draw away from duty; hence to lead astray, corrupt. "Obsolete in English before the middle of the seventeenth century; retained longer in Scotch; revived by Scott, and now frequent in literary English with somewhat vaguer sense than *debauched*" (Murray). *Deboshed* is the only form in Shakespeare.

deer (iii. 4. 144). Not used in its modern special sense, but applied to animals generally, usually to quadrupeds as distinct from birds and fishes. O.E. *déor*. Not connected with Gr. θήρ, a wild beast.

demand (iii. 2. 65; v. 3. 62), ask; the commoner meaning of the word in Shakespeare. Cf. the substantive, i. 5. 3. Fr. *demander*, Lat. *de* + *mandare*.

digest (i. 1. 130), divide, dispose of. Lat. *digerere*, to carry asunder, divide, *dis* + *gerere*. Schmidt's explanation that it is used figuratively in the sense of "enjoy" is untenable.

earnest (i. 4. 104), money paid beforehand as a pledge. The derivation is uncertain. Cf. O. Fr. *erres*, Mod. Fr. *arrhes*, from Lat. *arrha*. The Scottish form *arles* is apparently from the same root.

engraffed (i. 1. 301), engrafted. *Graff* was the original form, and was in common use in E.E. The current form *graft* probably arose from the use of *graft* (*graffed*) as the p. part. of the old form. O.Fr. *grafe, greffe* (Mod. Fr. *greffe*), a slip of a tree, originally a pointed instrument. Late Lat. *graphium*, a writing style. Gr. γράφειν, to write. The Qq have the form *ingrafted*.

enormous (ii. 2. 176), abnormal, monstrous. Lat. *enormis, e* + *norma*, pattern, rule. This is the only instance of the word in Shakespeare's plays. The usual sense now — "huge" — is derivative.

entertain (iii. 6. 83), take into service; a common meaning in E.E. Cf. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ii. 4. 110, "entertain him for your servant." Fr. *entretenir*, Lat. *inter* + *tenere*.

esperance (iv. 1. 4), hope. O.Fr. *esperance*, Late Lat. *sperantia, sperare*, to hope.

essay (i. 2. 47), trial, test. O.Fr. *essai* or *assai*, Lat. *exagium*, "weighing," hence "examination," *exigere*, "to weigh, consider," *ex* + *ago*. The commoner form in Shakespeare is *assay; essay* occurs only here and in *Sonnets*, cx. 8. Cf. **say**.

exhibition (i. 2. 25), allowance. O.Fr. *exhibicion*, Late Lat. *exhibitionem*, maintenance, *exhibere*, to maintain, support, in legal sense. (Cf. *exhibitio et tegumentum* = food and raiment.) Its original meaning was "maintenance, support"; hence, as here, "allowance, pension." This sense survives only in its specialized use as a kind of scholarship given by an English college, etc. It has the sense of "present" in *Othello*, iv. 3. 75: "I would not do such a thing for a joint-ring . . . nor any petty exhibition." The meaning "display," etc., is comparatively late.

favours (iii. 7. 40), features. M.E. *favour*, Nor. Fr. *favor*, Lat. *favorem*, kindliness. The meaning "face," "features," arose from the common transition from the feeling or dis-

position to that which expresses it. The meaning "face" is more common than the specialized meaning "features of the face"; but cf. *1 Henry IV*, iii. 2. 136, "and stain my favours in a bloody mask." Cf. the colloquial use of the verb in the sense of "to resemble."

feature (iv. 2. 63), outward form, appearance. O.Fr. *faiture*, Lat. *factura*, from *facere*, to make. In E.E. it preserved its original general sense of "make, form, shape." It is not used in Shakespeare in the specialized modern sense of the parts of the face.

fell (v. 3. 24), strictly a hide, skin with the hair on; but often used of the human skin, as in the phrase *flesh and fell*, which means the whole body. O.E. *fel*, cognate with Lat. *pellis*.

flaws (ii. 4. 288), shivers, splinters; akin to *flake* and *flag* (stone). Cf. *flaw'd*, broken, cracked (v. 3. 196).

fond (i. 2. 51; i. 4. 323; iv. 7. 60), foolish. M.E. *fonned*, p.p. of *fon*, primarily "to lose savour," hence "to be foolish"; probably the source of M.E. *fon*, "foolish," "a fool," as well as of the later word *fun*. From meaning "foolish, silly," it came to mean "foolishly tender," then "affectionate," the change arising from the association of warm feeling with mental weakness. The inverse process has taken place in the M.E. *silly*, which comes ultimately from O.E. *sǽl*, "happiness."

forfended (v. 1. 11), forbidden. M.E. *forfenden*, ward off, *for* + *fenden*, a shortened form of *defenden*, from Lat. *defendere*. As *for* is an English prefix — of similar force to the Latin prefix *de* — *forfenden* is thus a hybrid.

fret (i. 4. 307), wear, eat away. O.E. strong verb *fretan*, consume, from O.Teut. *fra* + *etan*, to eat. The verb is weak in E.E., but a strong p.p. survives in *fretten*, the Quarto reading of *The Merchant of Venice*, iv. 1. 77.

frontlet (i. 4. 208). See note. O.F. *frontelet*, dim. of *frontel*, ultimately from Lat. *frons*, the forehead.

fumiter (iv. 4. 3), fumitory. O.Fr. *fumeterre*, Med. Lat. *fumus terrae*, "smoke of the earth"; so called because "it springeth . . . out of the earth in great quantity." Hence "*rank* fumiter."

gallow (iii. 2. 44), terrify. An obsolete form of *gally*. O.E. *agælwan*, to alarm. Cf. *gallicrow*, used in Wessex for "scarecrow."

gasted (ii. 1. 57), frightened. O.E. *gǽstan*. The verb *gast* is the same as the verb *agast*, of which the only part in use is the p.p. *agast*, now erroneously spelled *aghast*.

germens (iii. 2. 8), germs, the seeds of life. Lat. *germen*. Cf. *Macbeth*, iv. 1. 59, "though the treasure Of nature's germens tumble all together."

good-years (v. 3. 24). An indefinite name for an evil power or agency. The word was first used as a meaningless expletive, as in the phrase "What the good year!" But apparently from the equivalence of this phrase with "What the devil! plague!" etc., it came to be used in imprecations and curses for an undefined evil power. The phrase "What the good-year," which was probably adopted from the Dutch *wat goedjaar*, occurs in *The Merry Wives*, i. 4. 129 (spelled *good-jer*), *Much Ado*, i. 3. 1, and *2 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 64 and 191. The present is the only in-

stance in Shakespeare in which it is used in its secondary force. The word is commonly defined, since Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition of Shakespeare, 1744, as the name of a disease. It is said to be a corruption of the Fr. *goujeres*, a hypothetical derivative of *gouje*, a camp-follower. But this derivation and definition are erroneous (Bradley).

holp (iii. 7. 62). Of the strong inflexions of *help*, the normal M.E. past tense was *halp;* the pl. was *holpen*, later *holp* or *holpe*, which c. 1500 was extended also to the sing., and continued in frequent use till the seventeenth century (Murray).

hurricanoes (iii. 2. 2), waterspouts. Span. *huracan*. The modern form *hurricane* was established only in the latter half of the seventeenth century. It is not found in Shakespeare. The form *hurricano* occurs also in *Troilus and Cressida*, v. 2. 172, where also it has the sense of waterspout.

inheriting (ii. 2. 20), possessing. M.E. *inheriten, enheriten*, O.Fr. *en-heriter*, Lat. *hereditare*, to inherit. Often used in E.E. in the loose sense of "come into possession of." Cf. the Biblical phrase, "shall inherit the earth."

interess'd (i. 1. 87), have an interest (or right) in. *Interess* (noun and verb) is the early form of *interest*, and is common in E.E. From M.E. and Anglo-Fr. *interesse* (subst.), Lat. *interesse*, to concern, be of importance.

intrinse (ii. 2. 81), intricate, involved. Perhaps an abbreviation of *intrinsicate;* see *Antony and Cleopatra*, v. 2. 307. Cf. *reverbs*, i. 1. 156.

justicer (iii. 6. 23, 59). O.Fr. *justicier*, Late Lat. *justitiarius;* thus identical in derivation with "justiciar" or "justiciary." It is used by Shakespeare in the sense of "justiciar" or "administrator of justice"; but it has often the less specialized meaning of "one who maintains justice, upholds the right," as in iv. 2. 79. In iii. 6. 23 the Ff and Qq read *justice;* Theobald's emendation *justicer* is supported by line 59.

knapped (ii. 4. 125), knocked, struck. Of onomatopoetic formation, the original meaning being "to strike with a hard, sharp sound."

knave (i. 1. 21; i. 4. 46, 103), boy, servant. M.E. *knaue*, O.E. *cnafa, cnapa*, a boy. Cf. Ger. *knabe*. From meaning a male child, it came to mean a boy employed as a servant, in both of which senses it is used in *King Lear*. Shakespeare uses it also in its modern sense of "rascal," "villain."

liege (i. 1. 36), sovereign. M.E. *lige, lege, liege*, O.Fr. *lige, liege*, O.H.G. *ledic*, free, unrestrained. Hence properly used, as in the title *liege-lord*, of the feudal suzerain. Skeat quotes from Barbour's Bruce, "Bot and I lif in lege pouste" = but if I survive in *free and indisputed* sovereignty. But by supposed connection with Lat. *ligatus, ligare*, to bind, the word was applied to the vassals of the liege-lord. Hence the modern use in the sense of citizens, as in the phrase "the safety of the lieges."

mainly (iv. 7. 65), perfectly. Cf. *main* = chief, principal. O.Fr. *maine, magne*, great, Lat. *magnus*. Commonly in Shakespeare with the sense "forcibly," "mightily."

marry (iii. 2. 40; iv. 2. 68), an exclamation derived from the oath "by the Virgin *Mary*."

maugre (v. 3. 131), in spite of, O.Fr. *maulgre* (Mod. Fr. *malgré*), literally "ill will." Ultimately from Lat. *malus*, bad, and *gratum*, a pleasant thing.

meiny (ii. 4. 35), household, M.E. *meinee, mainee*, a household, O.Fr. *maisnee*, Low Lat. *mansionata*, a household, Lat. *mansio*, a dwelling. The word is spelled *many* in Spenser, *Faërie Queene*, v. 11. 3, 2. It is the source of *menial*.

mere (iv. 1. 22), unalloyed, pure. O.Fr. *mier*, Lat. *merus*, unmixed, especially of wine.

mess (i. 1. 119), dish of food. O.Fr. *mes*, a dish, literally that which is placed on the table; Low Lat. *missum, mittere*, to place; Lat. *mittere*, to send. Cf. Mod. Fr. *mets*.

minikin (iii. 6. 45), dainty, pretty. Cf. Dutch *minnekyn*, a cupid, darling, a diminutive of *minne*, love, cognate with O.H.G. *minna*, love. Allied to *minion* and Fr. *mignon*.

miscreant (i. 1. 163), wretch. Originally an "unbeliever," and perhaps used here in this sense. O.Fr. *mescreant*, Lat. *minus* + *credentem*. Cf. **recreant**, below.

modest (ii. 4. 25; iv. 7. 5), moderate. Fr. *modeste*, Lat. *modestus*, moderate, measurable, from *modus*, a measure. Shakespeare uses the word both in this original sense and in its derivative and current sense, "decent" or "diffident."

moiety (i. 1. 7), part, portion: strictly a half. Anglo-Fr. *moyte* (Mod. Fr. *moitié*), a half, Lat. *medietatem*, from *medius*, middle. Shakespeare uses it in both senses, "half" and "part."

motley (i. 4. 160), M.E. *mottelee*, O.Fr. *mattelé*, "curdled." Hence "spotted," "variegated." Strictly an adjective, but used by Shakespeare as a substantive: (1) as the dress of the Fool, as here; and (2) as the Fool himself, *e.g.* "And made myself a motley to the view," *Sonnets*, cx. 2.

naughty (iii. 4. 116; iii. 7. 36), bad, wicked, as frequently in E.E. M.E. *naught*, O.E. *nawhit, na*, no + *whit*, thing; hence "worthless," "good for nothing," "wicked." The sense "mischievous" is modern. Cf. *naught* = wicked, ii. 4. 136.

nicely (ii. 2. 110; v. 3. 144), punctiliously, with nicety. O.Fr. *nice*, simple, Lat. *nescius*, ignorant. The original meaning in English was "foolish," as in Chaucer; but in E.E. it had acquired the meaning of "fastidious" as applied to persons, and "petty," "trifling" as applied to things. "The remarkable changes in sense may have been due to confusion with E. *nesh*, which sometimes meant 'delicate' as well as 'soft'" (Skeat). Shakespeare does not use the word in the modern sense "pleasant."

œillades (iv. 5. 25), glances, amorous or inviting. The Qq read *aliads*, the Ff *eliads* (1st) and *iliads* (2d, 3d, and 4th). "It cannot be decided whether Shakespeare wrote the French word or some anglicized form of it." The word occurs also in *Merry Wives*, i. 3. 68.

offend (i. 1. 310), hurt, harm. M.E. *offenden*, Fr. *offendre*, Lat. *offendere*, to strike or dash against. *Offend* is strictly the opposite of *defend*, this sense surviving in the phrase "on the offensive," etc. The strong sense of "hurt," "harm" is comparatively rare in Shakespeare, who uses the

word chiefly in its modern signification; but cf. *2 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 126, "She is pistol-proof, sir; you shall hardly offend her."

or ere (ii. 4. 289), before. The two words are identical in meaning, both being derived from the O.E. *ǽr*, before. But it is probable that *ere* was considered a contraction for *ever* = e'er. Shakespeare has both forms, *or ere* and *or ever* (*Hamlet*, i. 2. 183).

owes (i. 1. 205), possesses; **owest** (i. 4. 133). M.E. *owen*, *awen*, O.E. *agan*, *ah*, "possess." The current sense of "obligation" arises from the idea of possessing what belongs to another. The word is used in this modern sense in iii. 4. 108.

pelting (ii. 3. 18), paltry — which has partly the same source. The Northern word *paltrie* or *peltrie*, a substantive meaning "trash," was probably the source of E.E. *paultring*, *peltering*, "petty," and *pelter*, "a mean person." By association with these, *pelt*, "skin," acquired the suggestion of "trash," and from it appears to have been formed, during the sixteenth century, the word *pelting*, on the analogy of *peltrie*, *peltering* (Herford). Note the modern *pelting*, a distinct word, in iii. 4. 29.

perdu (iv. 7. 35). Not from Fr. *enfant perdu*, a soldier of a forlorn hope, but from *sentinelle perdue*, a sentry placed in a very advanced and dangerous position. Thus "to *watch* — poor perdu!"

perdy (ii. 4. 86), an exclamation. From Fr. *par Dieu*.

plaited (i. 1. 283), folded. M.E. *plaiten*, O.Fr. *pleit*, *plet*, a fold (Mod. Fr. *pli*); Lat. *plicatus*, *plicare*, to fold. The Qq read *pleated*, the Ff *plighted*, which are both doublets of *plaited*. The form *plight*, which is found in Spenser, — *e.g.* "with many a folded plight," *Faërie Queene*, ii. 3. 26, 5, — comes from M.E. *pliten*, the *gh* being an intrusion. It is quite distinct from **plight** (i. 1. 103), pledge, which comes from O.E. *pliht*, risk, danger, cognate with Ger. *pflicht*, duty.

pother (iii. 2. 50), turmoil. From the same source as *potter* and *poke;* not connected with "bother." The Ff read *pudder*, another form of the same word.

power (iii. 1. 30; iv. 2. 16; iv. 5. 1; v. 1. 51), army: a common meaning in E.E. M.E. *pouer*, O.Fr. *povoir*, Late Lat. *potere* = *posse*, to be able. Thus derivatively a substantival use of the infinitive mood. Cf. Fr. *pouvoir*.

presently (i. 4. 159; ii. 4. 34, 118), immediately, at once; the usual sense in E.E.

puissant (v. 3. 216), strong, great. F. *puissant*, Low Lat. *possens*, a pres. part. due to confusion between the correct form *potens* and the inf. *posse*. A doublet of *potent*.

quit (iii. 7. 87), requite. M.E. *quiten*, O.Fr. *quiter*, Lat. *quietare*, to set at rest. *Quit* is derivatively a shorter form of *quiet*.

recreant (i. 1. 169), coward. Strictly, one who has changed his faith. O.Fr. *recreant*, Lat. *re* + *credentem*. Cf. **miscreant** above.

renege (ii. 2. 84), deny. M.E. *reneye*, Low Lat. *renegare*, whence "renegade," etc. The *g* is pronounced hard. The spelling of the Qq is *reneag*.

reverbs (i. 1. 156), reverberates. Perhaps "a coined word, by contraction" (Skeat). Cf. *intrinse*, ii. 2. 81.

saw (ii. 2. 167), saying, proverb. M.E. *sawe, saȝe*, O.E. *sagu*, a saying, allied to *secgan*, to say. Cf. *As You Like It*, ii. 7. 156, "Full of wise saws."

say (v. 3. 143), proof, taste; a common aphetic form of *assay* or *essay* (q.v.). Cf. the verbal use in *Pericles*, i. 1. 59–60, "Of all say'd yet, mayst thou prove prosperous. Of all say'd yet, I wish thee happiness!"

sennet (i. 1, stage direction), a set of notes on a trumpet announcing the entry or exit of a procession. The word does not appear in the text of Shakespeare. The forms *synnet, sonnet, cynet*, and *signet* also occur.

several (i. 1. 45), respective, as commonly in E.E. O.Fr. *several*, Low Lat. *separale;* a doublet of "separate."

sith (i. 1. 183; ii. 4. 242), since. M.E. *sithen*. O.E. *siððan*, from *sið ðam*, after that. A doublet of *since*, which is from M.E. *sithens*, i.e. *sithen* + the adverbial termination *-s* or *-es*, as in *whiles*. Note that *sith* usually has the sense of "as," "seeing that," though it has a temporal force in *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 12.

sizes (ii. 4. 178), allowances. Short for *assize*, a fixed quantity. M.E. *assise*, O.Fr. *assis*, "an assembly of judges," "a sitting," "an impost," "quantity adjudged," ultimately from Lat. *sedere*, to sit. Hence the Cambridge term *sizar*, a scholar to whom certain "allowances" are made.

spill (iii. 2. 8), destroy. M.E. *spillen*, O.E. *spillan, spildan*, to destroy. Cf. *Hamlet*, iv. 5. 20:

> So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
> It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

stelled (iii. 7. 61), starry, stellate. Lat. *stellatus, stella*, a star. Schmidt and Craig take it to mean "fixed"; cf. *Sonnets*, xxiv. 1, "Mine eye hath played the painter and hath stell'd Thy beauty's form," and *Lucrece*, 1444, "To find a face where all distress is stell'd."

suggestion (ii. 1. 75), underhand action, the usual meaning of the word in Shakespeare. Cf. *suggest*, to prompt, incite criminally. M.E. *suggesten*, from p.p. of Lat. *suggerere*, literally "to carry or lay under," *sub* + *gerere*. *Suggest* and *suggestion* are commonly used in a bad sense in E.E.

tell (ii. 4. 55), count. M.E. *tellen*, O.E. *tellan*, to count, narrate.

tithing (iii. 4. 140), district. Originally a district containing ten families. O.E. *teóða*, a tenth.

treachers (i. 2. 133), traitors. M.E. *trecchour, tychor*, O.Fr. *trecher*, to cheat; ultimately of Teutonic origin; cognate with *trick*. This is the only instance of the word in Shakespeare, but it was common in E.E.

trowest (i. 4. 135), believest. M.E. *trowen*, O.E. *treówian*, to have trust in, *treówa*, trust.

tucket (ii. 1, stage direction), a flourish on a trumpet or cornet. Cf. *Henry V*, iv. 2. 35:

> Then let the trumpets sound
> The tucket sonance and the note to mount.

It. *toccata*, from *toccare*, to touch.

vaunt-couriers (iii. 2. 5), forerunners. Fr. *avant-coureur* (see *avaunt*). Cf. the contraction in *van, vanguard* (Fr. *avant-garde*).

villain (iii. 7. 87; iv. 6. 257), servant. O.Fr. *vilein*, Low Lat. *villanus*, a farm-servant; *villa*,

a farmhouse. The word has here its original sense, but the current degraded sense "scoundrel" is the more common in Shakespeare (*e.g.* i. 2. 180).

whiles (ii. 3. 5; iv. 2. 58), strictly the genitive of *while*, time, used adverbially. Cf. *twice*, from *twi-es*. This old genitive survives in *whilst*.

worships (i. 4. 288), dignities, credit. M.E. *worschip*, *wurðscipe*, O.E. *weorðscipe*, *wyrðscipe*, honor; a contraction of *worthship*, the *th* being lost in the fourteenth century.

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Play	Original Action		Shak. Wrote in
R. & J.	1300	A.D.	1595
Hamlet	900	"	1601-02
Othello	1570	"	1603
Lear	3105	B.C.	1605
Macbeth	700	A.D.	1606.